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"Entrepreneurs of Exploitation"

FILMFAX

The Magazine of Un... Television

JOHNNY
LEGEND
"The Sultan of Slease"

No.27

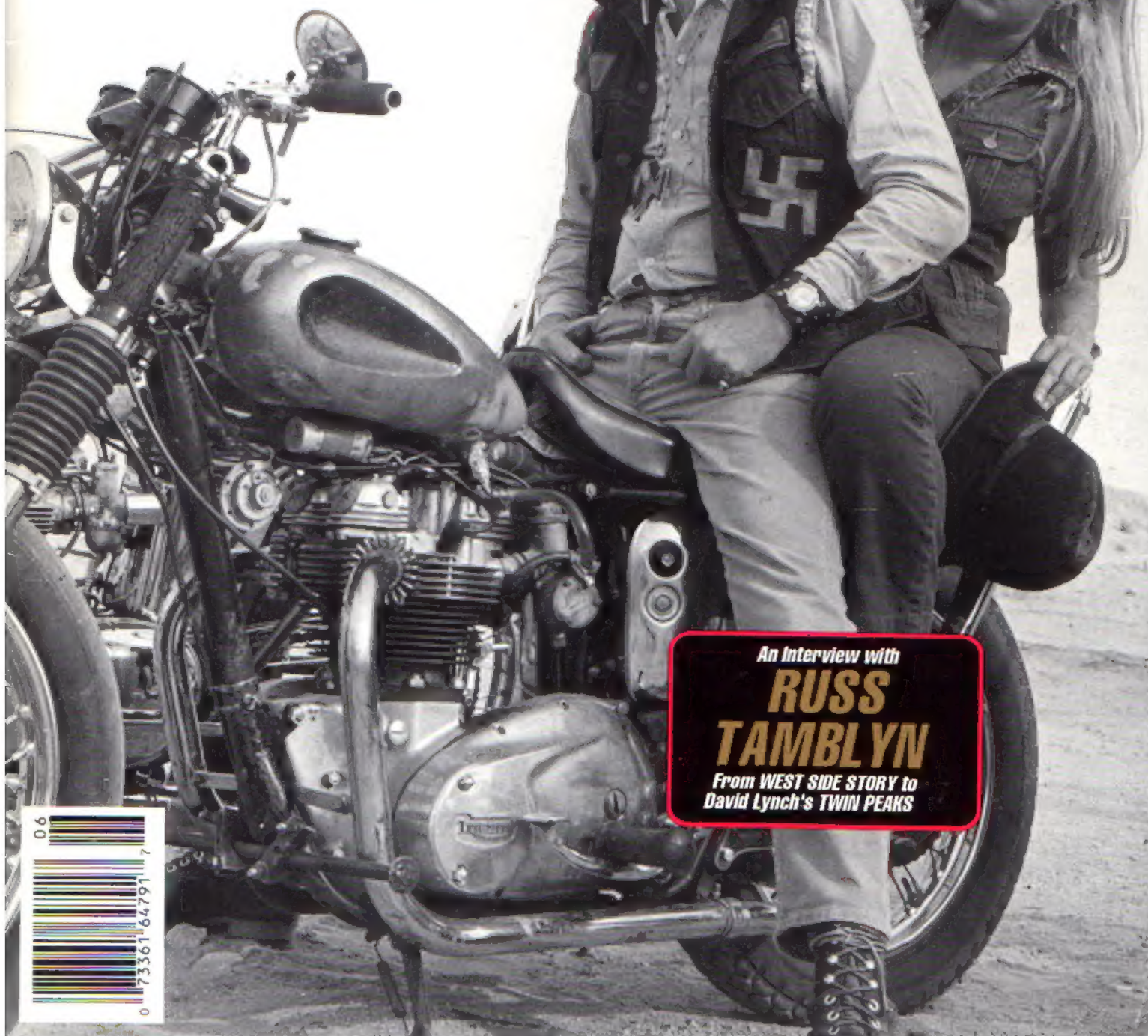
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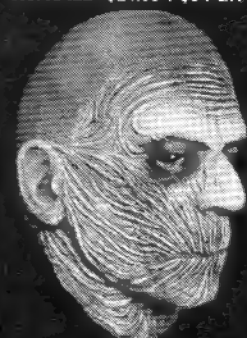
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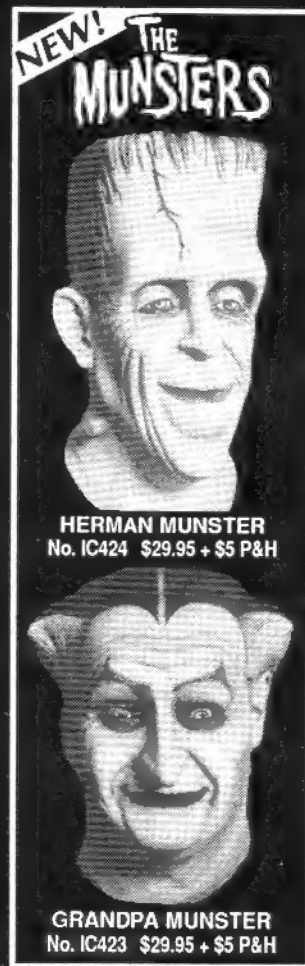
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Okay! You win! We give up! Once again our letter bin is overflowing with fanmail. So, guess what...we are officially turing over the deed to this column to you, our outspoken readership.

NOT SO NEW KID ON THE BLOCH

Once again I'm amazed by Filmfax's array of arcane information. Where else would one learn that Lionel Stander once worked with Fatty Arbuckle, let alone the secret of Arch Oboler's hairstyle?

One can only wish that more space was available for expanded coverage. I'd have liked to learn Stander's views on working with Ben Hecht on *The Scoundrel* and *Spectre of the Rose*. And there's certainly a lot more to Oboler's odd saga, from *Supernatural* on the screen to "The Night of the Auk" on stage, but it would probably require the writing style of a Budd Schulberg to do justice to such material.

It's a joy to see you venture off the beaten trail and come up with genuine gems of nostalgia. Now, on to the mysterious realms of truly lost films like *Gambling, Beer is Here, Soak the Rich*, with short subjects starring Joe Cook, Tom Howard & George Shelton, and (who knows?) Wheeler & Woolsey in *Oh, Oh Cleopatra!*

—Robert Bloch
Los Angeles, CA

DUCKY TALES

Gregory Catsos's article about Clarence "Ducky" Nash was quite good. However, veteran animator Shamus Culhane, in his book *Talking Animals and Other People*, presents a different version of how Nash ended up in Disney's employ. It involves Disney employee-turned-competitor Ub Iwerks.

Culhane was working for Iwerks in the mid-1930s. One of his projects was a version of that war-horse fable "The Little Red Hen." A voice for the hen was needed, and storyman Otto Englander (a Disney employee who had jumped ship to Iwerks's studio) remembered a milkman, Clarence Nash, who had auditioned for a radio show doing (I assume) animal noises. Nash auditioned for Culhane and company and proved perfect for the role; unfortunately, Iwerks wasn't present, and those that heard the audition lacked the authority to hire Nash. They urged him to return and audition for Iwerks later.

But Nash, his confidence bolstered, tried his luck with Disney that very same day, and animation history was made. Or so says Culhane. Nash provided the voice for that familiar duck in the sailor suit in Disney's "The Wise Little Hen." (Mere coincidence? Eh-h-h, co-o-o-o-uld be.)

Nash eventually got his chance (I assume) to meet the elusive Mr. Iwerks, when the latter, after failing to make household names out of "Willie Whopper" and "Flip the Frog" (proof positive that there is a god), returned to Disney. Culhane



worked for Uncle Walt for a while, as well.

Has anybody else heard a version of how Nash came to work for Disney? If there are enough responses, we can do a Toontown version of *Roshomon* (or, at least, one on the level of *Les Girls*). In the meantime, how about some articles on other voice actors, such as June Foray, Daws Butler, or Pinto Colvig? They all deserve their due.

By the way, Nash and Donald are in Disney World in the picture on page 94, not Disneyland. (Okay, I'll shut up now.) —Chuck Campbell
Newport News, VA

RETURN OF THE ANSWER MAN

Answer Man here. Harold Pfeffer of The Bronx in Issue #26 asked who played the role of Dr. George Brandt in the 1947 Monogram release *Charlie Chan in the Trap*.

Is Harold trying to confuse The Answer Man? Monogram only made four Charlie Chan films, none by that name. However, there was a 1947 film titled *The Trap* in which Charlie Chan appeared with a character named Doc Brandt, Physiotherapist. The actor was Walden Boyle. No, I never heard of him either, but he does have a number of other credits between 1946 and 1949, usually playing professional men (prosecutor, chaplain, professor) in low-budget films.

—Robert F. Bradford
Westtown, NY

TWONKY TURN-ON

I saw *The Twonky* on TV in the Chicago area around 1957. I was knocked out by the image of a TV walking around. Sid Pink did not see *The Twonky* in the context of TV fare at my house. I thought it was damn funny and strange, but most of all, it was different. I think the pictures in *Filmfax* are going to intrigue those who did not see *The Twonky*. If *Five* was so great, why no pix?

I agree with the reader who put down Issue #24, and I'll tell you why. Charlton Heston is not the type of actor/person I can dig. His politics and roles are a turn-off. Donald Duck is a definite improvement.

—Bill Whorrall
Shoals, IND

[Editor's Note: Some people confuse entertainment and politics. Heston's contribution to the film industry should be without question. Perhaps *Ben-Hur*, *El Cid*, *The Ten Command-*

ments, *Soylent Green*, etc. are not the types of films you enjoy. There are thousands who do. Filmfax is apolitical. We stand by our issue.]

A MISSPENT YOUTH

Issue #25 was great! No, marvelous! The interview with Allan Jones was great. I hope to see more on the Marx Bros. in future issues.

And about Tony Persia's letter. I don't care what you guys say, you are a fanzine. I know you said that you weren't, but this is what every fan has always dreamed of! This is, aside from the golden first issues of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and *Cinefantastique* magazines, the best time for fans ever! Aside from *Filmfax*, there's *Starlog*, which is more of a flashy, say-everything-is-good semi-gorezine. Boo! Hiss! Boo! Down! Down, I say with gore!

Well, I suppose I should tell you guys who I am, and that I'm probably your youngest reader. I'm (drum roll, please) TWELVE! I consider myself a hardcore fan, owning a small collection of stills, and just yesterday, I bought my first lobby card (*Tomb of Ligeia*, 1965). As far as reader goes, I read more stuff on horror and old comedies, and I'm a tremendous Ray Bradbury fan.

To end this letter, I'd like to thank Forry Ackerman for the phone call, the letters, and all those books and issues of *FM*. There are people out there that would have *Filmfax* and 4e and horror condemned, but they're the same ones who say that Mighty Mouse is the cause of the drug problem in America. —Patrick Tilford
Jacksonville, FL

[Editor's Note: Well, our young friend, what are we going to do about you? Guess we'll just have to adopt you. You're obviously our long lost son. Keep the faith, kid.]

A FUROR ON DER FUEHRER

I thoroughly enjoyed Issue #26. However, in Gregory Catsos' interesting article on Clarence Nash, he states that "Der Fuehrer's Face" won an Oscar and "also became famous for its theme song, later recorded by the zany Spike Jones..." As Jones' biographer, I wish to point out that the record was released prior to the film. Jones recorded the song for RCA Victor on July 28, 1942. The cartoon was originally titled "Donald Duck in Axis Land" and subsequently called "Donald Duck in Nutziland" (the first pressings of the record are labeled "From the Walt Disney film, 'Nuttsey Land.'") The record was released in September and made the obscure Jones and his City Slickers famous; in October Disney capitalized on Jones' success by retitling the cartoon "Der Fuehrer's Face." The film was not released until January 1, 1943.

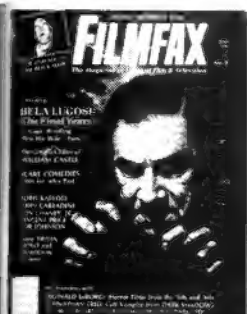
I'd also like to add the following to James Neibaur's article on Lionel Stander: the e.e. cummings play in which Stander made his stage debut—at the famed Provincetown

Continued on page 8

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ISSUE #3 Special All-Horror Edition: Bela Lugosi, The Final Years; Horror Master, Reginald Leborg; Shock and Schlock of William Castle; Gloria Stuart on The Old Dark House; TV Vampire Jonathan Frid; Classic Scare Comedies; More!



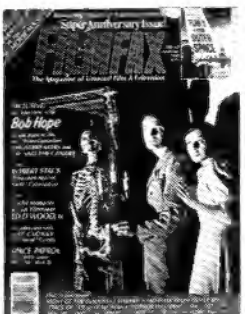
ISSUE #4 "The Men in the Gray Rubber Suit" Edition; Paul Blaisdell; Creature from the Black Lagoon; She Creature; Alligator People; IT, Terror from Beyond Space; Hideous Sun Demon with Robert Clarke; Stan Winston on Aliens.



ISSUE #5 "Flying Saucer Anniversary" Edition; First UFO Film, The Flying Saucer; Battle in Outer Space; Flying Disc Man from Mars; Earth vs. Flying Saucers; 3 Stooges in Orbit; Forrest J Ackerman's Shape of Things that Never Came.



ISSUE #6 "Best of Filmfax"; Space Patrol TV; Plan 9 from Outer Space; The Adventures of Captain Midnight; Tobor the Great; Films of Ed D. Wood, Jr.; Forrest J Ackerman on "Ek"; Dick Miller on Early AIP; "Candid Horror Photo Album."



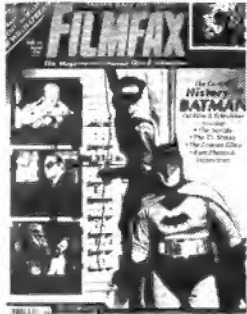
ISSUE #7 Giant Anniversary Edition: Bob Hope interview on Early Career; Cat & the Canary; Ghostbusters; The Films of Allison Hayes and Ed D. Wood, Jr.; Night of the Ghouls; Robert Stack on Colonization; Space Patrol.



ISSUE #8 "Classic PRC Film Noir" Edition; Detour Retrospective; Tom Neal, Jr.; Films of Edgar Ulmer (Pt. 1); Moe's Daughter Remembers the 3 Stooges; Last City of the Jungle; Just Imagine; Death of TV Superman George Reeves.



ISSUE #9 Mel Blanc interview; Monogram Pictures; Robinson Crusoe on Mars; Ken Tobey interview; The Making of Attack of the B-Movie Monster; Return to Robin Hood's Sherwood Forest; Perils of Nyoka; Ingrid Pitt interview.



ISSUE #10 Complete History of Batman: Serials and TV; Adam West; Yvonne Craig; Carnival of Souls; Gorilla stuntman Steve Carter; The Lost Worlds of Willis O'Brien; Colossus of New York; History of PRC Studios; Sabu.



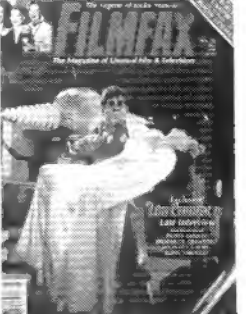
ISSUE #11 Science Fiction Theatre; Captain Midnight; Richard Webb interview; The Day the Earth Stood Still; Michael Rennie; Angry Red Planet; Glamour Girls from Outer Space; The Queen of Outer Space; FJA Sells Collection; More!



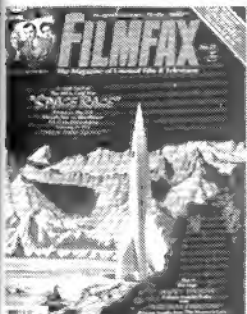
ISSUE #12 Monster of Piedras Blancas; Lugosi's Last Screen Roles; "Brain" Movies; plus Joseph Green's The Brain That Wouldn't Die; Robb White & William Castle; Last Chan; Roland Winters; Great Horror Detectives; Kyo Luke.



ISSUE #13 1950s TV Sci-Fi: Rocky Jones, Space Ranger; Arthur "Dagwood" Lake; Barbara Steele; Monster that Challenged the World; FJA on Thief of Bagdad; "Thief" SFX, 1920s Style; William Bakewell on Doug Fairbanks, Sr.



ISSUE #14 Lon Chaney, Jr.'s Last Interview; TV's Rocky Jones, Space Ranger (Pt. 2); Jacko Mahoney; Evelyn Ankers; Hazel Court; Robert Campbell on working with Roger Corman; Serial King Henry MacRae. Plus More!



ISSUE #15 Men Into Space TV sci-fi docudrama; SFX make-up artist Harry Thomas; History of Dick Tracy (Pt. 1); Lon Chaney, Jr. remembered (Pt. 2); Virginia Christine interview; Forrest J Ackerman on his late wife Wendayne. More!



ISSUE #16 "Abbott & Costello Meet" Movies; Sword & Sandal epics; Laurette Lutz, star of Prehistoric Women, interviewed; director Gene Fowler and actor Whit Bissell interviewed; Dick Tracy (Pt. 2); "Hidden Heroines" of B-movies.



ISSUE #17 Mamie Van Doren; 3-D cult classic Beware Devil; "Bowery Boy" Huntz Hall; Sylvia Sydney interviewed; Turgid Teen films; Prehistoric Women plus producer Sam Albarbanel; Forrest J Ackerman uncovers Helvision; More!



ISSUE #18 Special Christmas: Samuel Santa Claus Conquers the Martians; Jimmy Stewart interview; Making of Disney's Babes in Toyland; matinee mogul K. Gordon Murray; Charlton Heston interview; Fleischer cartoons; Popeye. More!



ISSUE #19 Allan Jones on Marx Bros.; Chaney Sr.'s West of Zanzibar; Silent Film restoration; Frankie Thomas on Tom Corbett; Space Cader; Eli Wallach interview; composer/conductor Albert Glasser interview; 3-D making of The Mask.



ISSUE #20 Clarence "Ducky" Nash interview; making of The Two-Tonky; Soupy Sales interview; Rondo Hatton remembered; Karl-Loth & Cohn at Columbia; John Wayne's Monogram films; Sam Arkoff interview; Lionel Slander.

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Playhouse in 1928—was entitled "Him." As for Stander's film career, prior to the Vitaphone two-reelers, he reportedly appeared in the 1926 Milton Hines silent, *Men of Steel*. He was branded a "red" long before the McCarthy hearings, in 1939, and was tainted by the label—appearing in only a handful of major studio films—until Tony Richardson broke the blacklist by casting him in *The Loved One* in 1963. Though he appears infrequently in films today, as noted, he had a small part in last year's *Cookie* with Peter Falk.

—Jordan R. Young
Anaheim, CA

MAYNARD MAKES IT

Regarding the article on the "Duke" at Monogram article in *Filmfax* # 26, the stock footage used was from old Ken Maynard movies that he had made at First National (Warner Bros. merged with them and owned the films).

The Big Stampede (1932) was a remake with footage from *Land Beyond the Law* (1927) with actors Frank Ellis, Hank Bell and Lafe McKee repeating their roles from the original film. *Haunted Gold* (1932) is *The Phantom City* (1928) with Blue Washington and Charles (Slim) Whitaker reprising their roles. *The Telegraph Trail* (1933) uses footage from *The Red Raiders* (1927), and *Somewhere in Sonora* (1933) is Ken Maynard's version of the same titled movie made in 1927.

It's interesting to note that Dick Foran's early westerns at Warner's used footage (and some of the same actors) from the silent Ken Maynard series but also from the Duke's series of just two years before.

Keep up the good work. I've been reading your terrific magazine since issue number one.

—Harold Pfeffer
Bronx, NY

INSPIRINGS & INQUIRINGS

First of all, your magazine is the most amazing wealth of information on films, TV shows, actors and actresses that I grew up appreciating and enjoying. Most so-called "film magazines" write about the same old top 40 videos and the same old tired retreads of present day stars ad nauseam. Your magazine deals with the unsung heroes—those who gave endless enjoyment on low budgets and tight schedules requiring imagination and skill.

I'm an actor (*American Ninja I, II, III, Delta Force, I'm Gonna Get You Sucka, To Live and Die in L.A.*, etc.) and my professional inspiration comes from the hardworkers such as Woody Strode, Lee Van Cleef, Neville Brand, James Edwards, Juan Hernandez, Dave Sharp, Guy Williams, Clayton Moore, Rex Ingram, Steve Reeves, Gordon Scott, etc. Keep up the good work and memories.

Now, regarding R. B. Lawrence's letter in Issue #25. The sci-fi marionette show that played on WPIX in New York was called (or re-titled) *Planet Patrol*. WPIX showed it 1963-

1964, the same time NBC aired *Fireball XL-5*; it was an obvious attempt to cash in on Gerry Anderson.

I don't know much about the show's background, however I do remember also thinking that the show might have been Italian because I too thought that "Space City" resembled the miniatures from the Italo/Anthony Dawson space operas. Compared to *Fireball XL-5*, the show paled in comparison, although I remembered that the generators that ran Space City had kind of a soul beat to them that me and my homeboys used to get off on. Sort of a city built by James Brown and the Fabulous Flames.

The other fantasy film R. B. mentioned, however, is a stunner. I checked with my best friend from childhood and he didn't know it either.

I've got one for R.B. Do you remember a modern day pseudo-ninja show that WPIX showed in 1966 call (re-titled) *Phantom Agents*? It was a Japanese show, badly dubbed (made worse by local offscreen racist and corny commentary from WPIX's Jack McCarthy—yes, Capt. Jack McCarthy, but boy did it have action!

Meanwhile, *Filmfax*, you've got my subscription for life.

—Steve James
Los Angeles, CA

PHANTOM ISSUES

Your marvelous Issue #25 reminded me why I started reading your magazine in the first place. It's been too long since you've featured articles on the classic cinema leg-

ends of the 1920's-30's. I've grown so bored with your seemingly endless coverage of schlocky TV series, and ridiculous inept serials that I'd let my subscription lapse. For the past several issues, I have previewed them at my local Waldenbooks, always hoping that the content would compel me to purchase. Well, after #25, I am sending in my subscription fees at first opportunity. I only hope you continue in this manner.

I must take issue with Tom Weaver about his article on the 1925-29 original *Phantom of the Opera*. This was an otherwise excellent and informative piece, but his lauding of the Lumivision laser disc, without a mention of the vastly superior Image release, is something I couldn't let pass!

It is entirely possible that Mr. Weaver had not had the opportunity to view the Image disc prior to press-time, so let me be the first to inform your readers that Image offers a rendition that is not only less expensive than Lumivision's, but has an expert transfer of the color sequences. Lumivision's version of the rare 2-strip Technicolor scenes is, frankly, wretched! Whereas the Image release retains the subtle shadings I remember from owning film prints of these scenes; the dominate color in the Lumivision is a grainy and infuriating RED!!

Image's musical score is also superior, without Lumivision's defect of having recorded their score in the company of a ludicrously over-reactive audience. Further, Lumivision's

Continued on page 10

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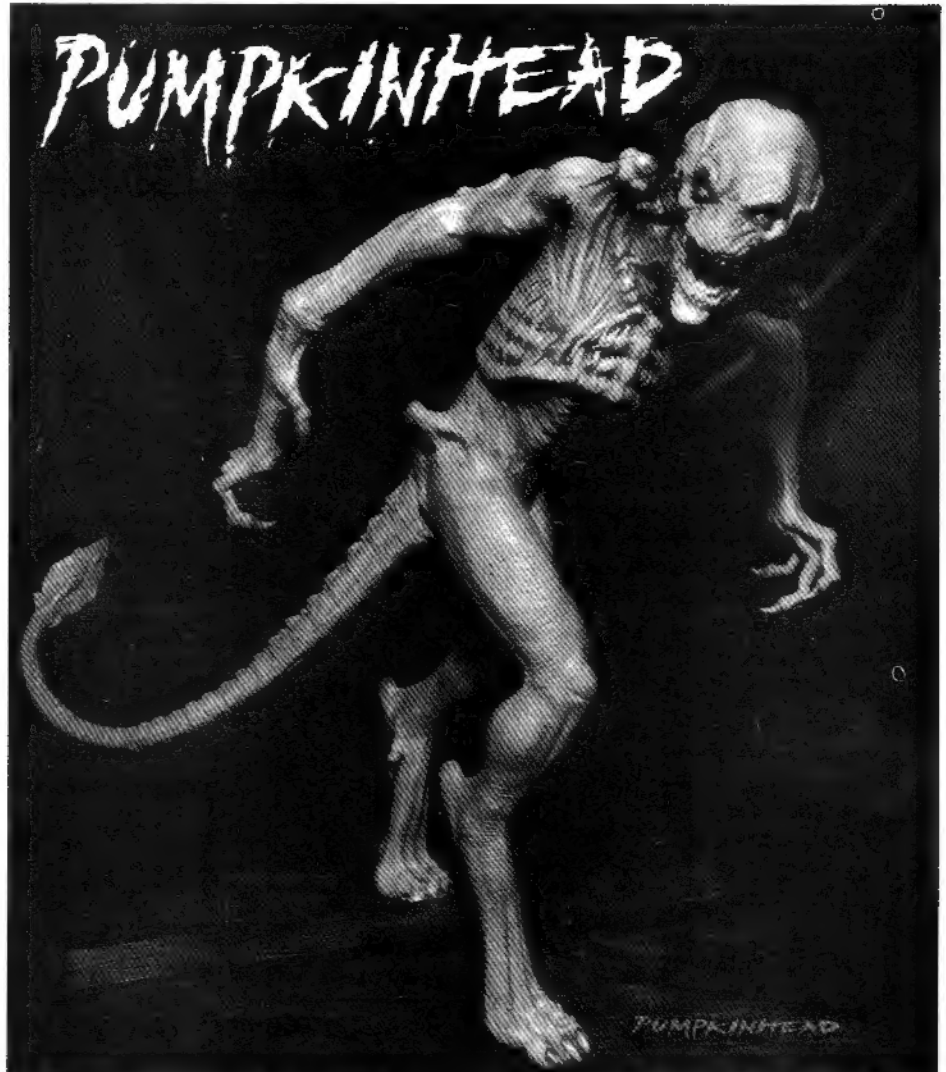
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exploitation of the turban-sporting swami who performs this music (a prime example of the Warholian 15-minute dialog) is barely short of obnoxious!

Not only does Image offer all of this, and for only \$39.95 (the Lumivision is \$49.95), but Image gives you one other huge extra; the complete and un-cut 1925 version (since, as per all authorities, all of the versions circulating today are of the 1929 reissue)!

So, Image is giving you two complete, and very dissimilar versions for less than the cost of the single and inferior Lumivision edition. Admittedly, the additional Image cut is in a very battered condition, and without the benefit of musical score, but for cinema archaeology fans and serious scholars of motion picture history like myself, this is an essential artifact that I would have paid full-price for, and have been seeking for years.

To be fair, let me mention that Lumivision's packaging is nothing short of gorgeous and puts Image's to shame. I guess for around \$90.00 you could purchase both, and have the Image discs with the Lumivision cover, but the Lumivision is a single pocket album, and, of course, the Image required two pockets for the two discs! Better to admire the Lumivision cover in the store, but bring home the Image release for your library.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to pass along this ca-

veat to my fellow film-buffs. As you may have already surmised, I made the mistake of purchasing the Lumivision version before the Image became available two months later, and I wish to prevent anyone else from being as disappointed as I was. I now own the beautiful double-set Image release and the fantastic Lumivision cover (as their disc will never see my laser player again)!

—Skip Huston
Decatur, IL

ANIMATION ADULATION

I enjoyed the articles on the Fleischer Brothers and on the film career of Popeye. Both seem to be totally ignored by most of the TV and print media. Yet, the Popeye film series is indeed the longest running and most enduring of the cartoons. King Features Syndicate, who owns the rights to the TV-Popeyes and Ted Turner who owns the original theatre cartoons should get together and do a special tribute to the character's popularity in the film medium. There has been so many specials on characters whose exposure is half that of Popeyes. It's about time the Fleischers and Popeye got the public attention they deserve!

—Michael DeMeo
Waltham, MA

PERSONALITY CONFLICT

Thank you for the interview with Sylvia Sidney. I especially liked her in *Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams* (1973) and was disappointed that she did not win the Oscar. I thought that her seniority alone would earn her the award, since even at the time,

she had been an actress for almost fifty years. Although her character dies early in the film, her role was certainly memorable. She plays a woman with a very commanding personality, accented by her heavy smoking and cigarette holder, not to mention the heavy make-up. I particularly liked the scene in the restaurant in which she demands quick service, bawls out the waiter for not slicing the lemon, and renders her opinion to her daughter (played by Joanne Woodward) about the service in the place.

Sidney played a similar role in an episode of TV's *Love Boat*, as a mother who disapproves of the girl her son meets and falls in love with on the ship. Sidney is continuously rude to the poor sweet thing and does everything she could do to drive her away from her son. However, at the end, when the girl decides that she could not marry him because she didn't feel she could tolerate Sidney's harassment, he has a talk with his mother and persuades her to accept the girl.

From what you stated in the beginning of your article, about Sidney being outspoken, temperamental and opinionated, I get the feeling that the two roles I mentioned, to a certain extent, reflect her true personality and a radical change from some of her earlier roles such as the librarian in *Violent Saturday* (1954) or Tom Tully's handicapped wife in *Behind the High Wall* (1956). In both films, her character was weak and emotional.

I would like to see Sidney win the

Academy Award. After all, she was a superstar competing with other leading ladies such as Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, and as she herself stated in her interview, had billing above Bogart, for crying out loud! After reading your article I was pleasantly surprised to see that she has not been forgotten. Thank you for your coverage of this great lady.

—Scott Sumliner
Oakhurst, NJ

[Editor's Note: We certainly agree that Sylvia Sidney is one of the great ladies of American film. We would not, however, say that any role that Sidney has played is indicative of her true personality. We call that acting.]

If you wish to express any of your own opinions, complaints, additional information, etc., send your letters to: FILMFAX Magazine / RE:EDITS, BOX 1900, EVANSTON, IL 60204

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DO YOU TRUST YOUR WIFE? (1956) Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy star in a program similar to Groucho Complete with L&M cigarette commercials. Plus *I've Got A Secret* (1961). It's Garry Moore's birthday. A special fun show with unique skits. (60 min.) **Order No: MC-14 Price: \$24.95**

MEET MILLIE (1952/55) Live comedy fun. The story of an attractive secretary who has a Mom who always tries to get her married. Secretly, Millie has eyes for the boss's son. This popular TV series was based on the radio series of the same name. Millie is played by Eileen Verdugo. Also with Florence Haas, Ross Ford, Roland Winters, and Marvin Kaplan. In "Vacation Plans" Millie and her boyfriend are supposed to spend their vacation in the mountains, but her guy wants to go fishing with the boys. "Texas Ranch" has all commercials intact, including Zarumini and Carter Little Liver Pills. (60 min.) **Order No: MC-58 Price: \$24.95**

LIFE WITH ELIZABETH (1953) Betty White and Del Moore star as newlyweds in this delightful comedy. Each show has three short vignettes about the couple. Enjoy "The Psychic," "Christmas Secret," "The Mambo," "The Restaurant," "Dance Lessons," and "Camping with Moose." Lots of laughs in these two shows. (60 min.) **Order No: MC-12 Price: \$24.95**

TROUBLE WITH FATHER (1955) Stu Erwin stars in two excellent episodes with guest star Martin Milner of Adam 12 and Route 66 fame. These two shows, "The Engagement" and "The Wedding," were special events on the series. Very funny episodes. (60 min.) **Order No: MC-15 Price: \$24.95**

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MY HERO (1952) Laughs with Bob Cummings as Bob Beanblossom a "not too good" real estate salesman. Also stars John Lital and Julie Bishop. Two episodes "Fishing Trip" and "Sky High." One show complete with cigarette commercials. (60 min.) **Order No: MC-3 Price: \$24.95**

A DATE WITH THE ANGELS (1957) A fun comedy series starring the witty Betty White as Victoria Angel, with Bill Williams as her husband. Two episodes, "The Chateau," and "The Wheeler." Both shows are complete with Plymouth commercials for that year. (60 min.) **Order No: MC-7 Price: \$24.95**

TAKE A GOOD LOOK (1961) The exceptional comic genius of Ernie Kovacs with the regular panel and Jim Bacus. Laughs galore with zany skits and Dutch Masters commercials. Plus, *You Asked For It* (1952) complete with silly Skippy Peanut Butter commercials. Included in this show is a portable helicopter to beat snarled traffic problems. See a Dragnet type skit, fishing from a fish's point of view, a snake dances and more. (60 min.) **Order No: MC-21 Price: \$24.95**

TAKE A GOOD LOOK (1959) ABC Comic genius Ernie Kovacs hosts this unusual panel show with Hans Conned, Cesar Romero and Edie Adams. This live telecast featured wild comedy skits as clues to guests' secrets. One guest is a former "Dead End Kid" who played with Bogart. Show is complete with Dutch Masters commercials, with Kovacs smoking a cigar under water and Edie singing the famous Munai Air Tip commercial. Also *The Jack Benny Show* (1957) CBS. Jack is at his best in this live show aired during the Easter season. Guest is Ronnie Burns, George Burns' son, who sings his latest single "She's Kina Cute." With Don Wilson and Rochester. Complete with Lucky Strike commercials. (60 min.) **Order No: VC-2 Price: \$24.95**



THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (1955) Willer Waterman plays Gildersleeve a pompous, bumbling but lovable character originated on the "Fibber McGee & Molly" radio show of the 1940s. These rare TV episodes (not to be confused with the feature films starring Harold Peary) co-starred Stephanie Griffith and Marjorie Foster. Two episodes "Tom Sawyer" and "Water Commissioner." (60 min.) **Order No: MC-5 Price: \$24.95**

UNCLE JOE (1941) This feature stars a young Gale Storm, Zasu Pitts, and Slim Summerville. Made by the John Deere Company to be shown at state fairs, the comedy program was shown to get prospects "into the tent" to sell them tractors. The story revolves around a teenager, an eccentric inventor farmer with craziest inventions and a radio soap opera jingle where the prize is the only hope to stop Zasu Pitts from being evicted from her farm. Campy teenagers, hot rods, jokes, and a radio show with great '40s music. (55 min.) **Order No: MC-46 Price: \$24.95**

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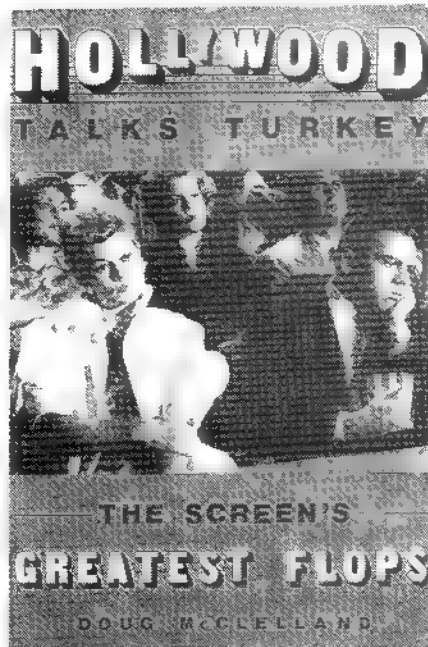
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HOLLYWOOD TALKS TURKEY: THE SCREEN'S GREATEST FLOPS by Doug McClelland. Faber and Faber, trade paperback, 285 pp., \$14.95

Everybody loves a winner, but there's something undeniably fascinating about a loser, too. This is particularly true in Hollywood, where crummy movies and busted careers are as cruelly visible as a bad complexion on a sunny day. In *Hollywood Talks Turkey: The Screen's Greatest Flops*, film historian Doug McClelland traces 70 years of movie misfires via an entertaining assemblage of quotes and anecdotes from movie people, many of which he solicited expressly for the book. Stars, directors, producers, writers, and studio chiefs come clean about the speed bumps that punctuated their journeys to fame and fortune.

The book's range, both of participants and the great breadth of movie history that is covered in their remarks, is laudable. Readers will find comments and anecdotes from people as disparate as Dana Andrews and Cyndi Lauper, Eddie Cantor and Diana Dors, Mary Pickford and Michael J. Fox. Whether bitter, regretful, amused, or just downright embarrassed, the comments make clear how easily good filmmaking intentions can go terribly wrong.

McClelland has arranged his collection of quotes in promising-sounding categories: "Megabuck Misfires," "Ego Eulogies,"



"Image Insults," and the like. Because I'm as petty and mean-spirited as the next fella, the first section I turned to was "Career Crushers." Sure enough, I wasn't disappointed. One notable quotation was from composer Max Steiner who said, "Two On a Guillotine—they criticized the picture and didn't like it and that was the end [of his years at Warner Brothers]. It wasn't a picture, it was an abortion.

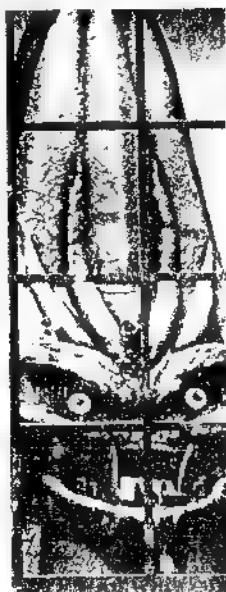
There was a big mistake in the thing, the guillotine was placed in the wrong place, you know. They should have cut off William Conrad's head for producing the thing. They said I killed the picture. That, I wouldn't take after 29 years." Then there are the immortal words of director John Schlesinger: "I'm always scared because one's success and failure these days is so rapidly judged on what the film will gross. After *Day of the Locust*, there were people going around saying, 'He must never be allowed near a camera again.'"

Proven star power is no guarantee of box office success or even of decent working conditions. In the section called "Turkey Time," Bill Murray recalls the making of *Scrooged*: "...I was trapped on a dusty, smelly, and smoky set in Hollywood for three-and-a-half months, having a lousy time by myself and just coughing up blood from this fake snow that was falling all the time."

Miscasting is a common pitfall (as recounted by Glenn Ford in his reminiscence of his doomed attempt to play a Spanish Gypsy in *The Loves of Carmen*). Sometimes, though, an actor's first instincts about a role are wrong. For example, Clark Gable asserted: "I really didn't want to play Rhett Butler in *Gone With the Wind*, which was set in the Old South. A couple of years before, I did *Parnell*, another historical drama that was the worst disaster."

Continued on page 14

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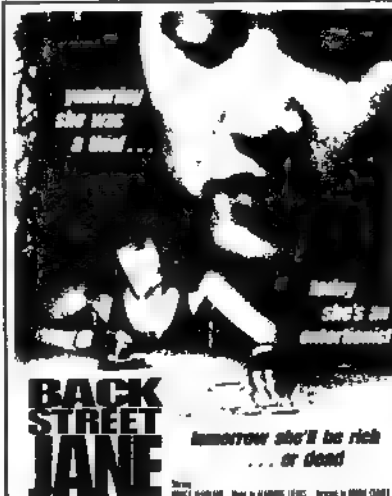
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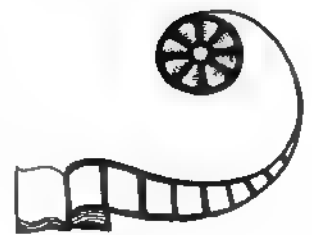
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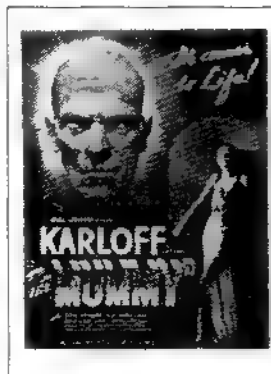
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ter I've ever had. I felt I was strictly a modern type fella."

My only gripe about the book is that its photos—while numerous and often intriguing—seem to have been randomly placed, so it's nearly impossible to find the remarks that relate to a particular image. There's a terrific publicity shot, for example, from *The Story of Mankind* showing Dennis Hopper and Marie Windsor as Napoleon and Josephine. Now, both of these stars are talented and highly appealing, but both are also very "modern," very urban. Sounds like sure-fire miscasting to me. There's probably a funny story in there somewhere, but I was unable to find it.

For all of the people that McClelland was able to bring into the book with new interviews, some potential subjects remained elusive or just not willing to discuss their misfires. He wrote to Don Ameche, for example, and received only an autographed 3 x 5 card in the return mail. Similarly, Ginger Rogers' secretary returned a form letter, a list of Ginger's motion picture credits, and a Ginger Rogers photo list, complete with prices. Most amusing of all was the response of onetime Fox star Jeanne Crain, whom McClelland had successfully interviewed for an earlier book, and whom he called as he prepared *Hollywood Talk Turkey*, hop-

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ing to elicit her comments regarding *The Fan*. It seems that every time Ms. Crain answered the phone, she insisted that she was Ms. Crain's maid!—never mind that her voice was clearly recognizable. And when she finally did 'fess up to being herself, she quickly but politely brushed McClelland off, saying she had to finish packing for Europe. McClelland reports that, after one of these puzzling phone conversations, he could only think of the title of one of Rex Reed's books: *People Are Crazy Here*.

—David J. Hogan

UNIVERSAL HORRORS: THE STUDIO'S CLASSIC FILMS 1931-1946 by Michael Brunas, John Brunas and Tom Weaver, 616 pp. \$45.00

McFarland & Co. has published still another book that genre film fans will want to own. *Universal Horrors*, by Michael Brunas, John Brunas, and Tom Weaver, is a well-researched, extraordinarily ambitious study of the 85 horror (and quasi-horror) films produced by Universal in the 15-year span from 1931 to 1946. Really a collection of 85 separate articles, the book offers synopses, complete production histories, behind-the-scenes-information, and intentionally provocative critical analyses. Nearly 150 photos, including original art and some marvelous blow-ups, add to the book's usefulness and appeal. *Continued on page 18*

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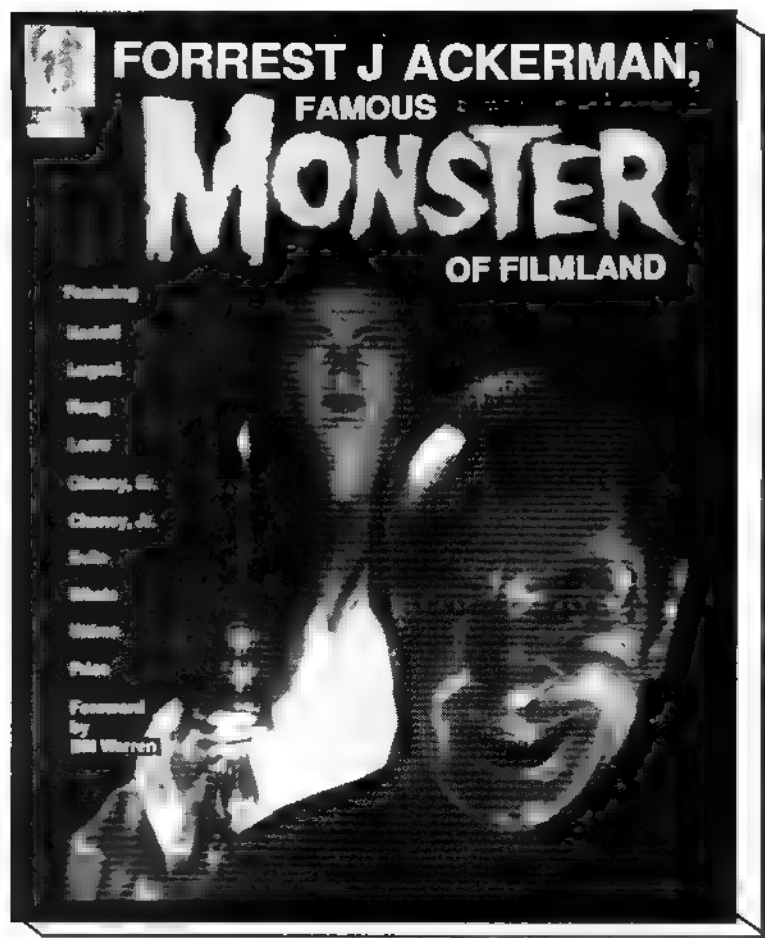
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Naturally, obvious milestone pictures the caliber of *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and its sequels, the *Mummy* series, and the Karloff and Lugosi team-ups are included. What makes the book especially nice is its coverage of less well-known, but no less interesting, titles. When was the last time you read a lengthy article about *Secret Of The Chateau*? How about *Night Life Of The Gods*, *The Black Doll*, or *Destiny*? Granted, not all of these lesser pictures are gems, but as part of the canon of a highly significant Golden Age film studio, they deserve to be analyzed.

The authors went right to the source for much of the book's information; ex-Universal employees as diverse as actress Acquafina, writer Curt Siodmak, and director Reginald LeBorg shared their reminiscences. This original research paid off in the form of some wonderful anecdotes, as well as information that exposes persistent myths. One such oft-repeated claim is that Lon Chaney, Jr. did not play the *Mummy* in the film series of the 1940s, and that his name was used only for the marquee value. The article about *The Mummy's Curse* addresses this claim by citing studio production reports, and the recollections of director Reginald LeBorg and members of the film's cast, to make clear that it was indeed Lon Chaney beneath the bandages.

Typical of film books published by McFarland, *Universal Horrors* is lively and

fun to read. The authors are not academics who have recently "discovered" horror films, but longtime fans who combine historical accuracy with a bit of cheerleading. They clearly love these movies, and their enthusiasm is evident on every page.

Yet the writers are not blinded by their love. Their critical comments about each film are thorough, and their points are backed up with lucid examples. And indeed, plenty of horror film purists are apt to be ruffled by the book's willingness to point out the all-too-obvious flaws of some of these historically significant but undeniably creaky pictures. On the one hand, hindsight-based criticism is very easy for a writer to do—particularly a writer who is looking at old movies from the perspective of the cynical, high-gloss 1990s. Undeniably, though (and as the authors point out), some of these movies have assumed a "sacred cow" status. Such status has encouraged many historians to take a hands-off attitude toward them, citing their historical significance while ignoring their flaws. Messrs. Brunas, Brunas, and Weaver ignore very little.

The authors' critique of *Dracula* for example, is almost merciless in its objectivity. This reviewer is a devoted Lugosi booster and so my hackles were raised by the authors' assertion that Bela's performance as the Count is "flawed and hammy." I paused to consider that remark and finally had to admit that, yes, I suppose it is a flawed and hammy job of acting. But that realization doesn't diminish the pleas-

ure I get from Bela or from *Dracula*. It certainly doesn't diminish the power of Lugosi's performance or the film's stature as a classic of the genre. Although the authors seem less fond of *Dracula* than I am, they don't hesitate to describe it as an "untarnished" movie milestone.

If you're feeling particularly grouchy, you might complain about the book's fondness for clichéd non-words, like "starrer" instead of "vehicle," and for the text's occasional descent into a contrived, *Variety*-ese shorthand (for instance, "subs" for the verb "substitutes"). But these are pretty minor complaints. *Universal Horrors* probably contains a quarter of a million words, and most of them are just fine.

—David J. Hogan

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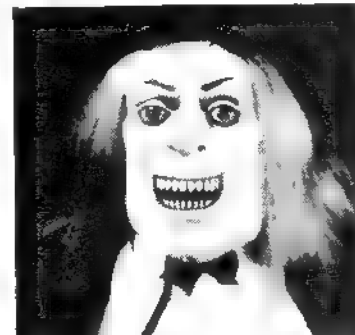


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Here's the lineup

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 25 (No. DI-25)



CARNIVAL OF SOULS (1962) Candace Hilligoss, Sidney Berger, Herk Harvey. This Heris-Lion release has stood the test of time and is now considered one of the best low budget horror films ever made. The lone survivor of a car wreck is haunted and followed by a ghostly personage. A riveting pipe organ music score. Seldom have elements of sight and sound come together in such a horrifying way. A haunting film you'll never forget.

THE DEVIL'S MESSENGER (1961) Lon Chaney, Karen Kadler, John Crawford. Another Heris-Lion release from the early 60s (whatever happened to Heris-Lion?). Lon plays Satan in this trio of very unusual horror stories. He sends his satanic messenger back to Earth at the film's climax with a very 'special' gift for all the people of the world. If you enjoyed ONE STEP BEYOND or TWILIGHT ZONE you'll get a kick out of this.

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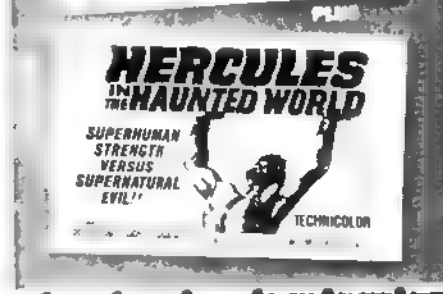


DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 26 (No. DI-26)

CASTLE OF BLOOD (1964) Barbara Steele, George Riviere, Margaret Robsahm. One of the most atmospheric Italian horror films ever made. A newspaper columnist decides to spend the night in a haunted castle via a bet with the castle's owner who claims he'll be dead by morning. Steele is ravishing as the living ghost who falls for the young writer who spends a night with the dead. Eerie, suspenseful, and still frightening even by today's standards. Gothic horror at its best!

HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD (1961) Reg Park, Christopher Lee, Leonora Ruffo. Although it had been released a couple of years before, the Woolner brothers decided to rerelease this sword and sandal classic as part of a double bill with a new Barbara Steele import. Hercules takes an excursion into Hades facing rock monsters, female demons, and other assorted monstrosities. Lee is superb as his evil nemesis. One of the very best. If not the best, non-major studio, sword & sandal import.

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DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 27 (No. DI-27)

GIANT OF METROPOLIS (1962) Gordon Mitchell, Bella Cortez. A moody, interesting combination of science fiction, adventure, and fantasy. Harrison plays a heroic musketeer caught in a web of intrigue within an ancient scientific supercity. His evil ruler conducts weird, scientific experiments while the city awaits its impending doom from a natural cataclysm. Wonderful music. Color.

INVINCIBLE GLADIATOR (1962) Richard Harrison, Isabelle Corey. This color adventure is jammed with all the things you usually expect in a gladiator movie: death duels in the arena, peace intrigue, gladiators in revolt, etc. Harrison plays the little hero who fights an evil tyrant for the freedom of a group of oppressed people. Good sword and sandal excitement.

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DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 28 (No. DI-28)

SHE DEMONS (1957) Tod Griffin, Irish McCallis, Victor Sen Young. A hurricane strands a group of people on a jungle island that is targeted for practice bombings by the air force. There they encounter a hidden Nazi camp where a mad scientist conducts strange experiments on native women, turning them into horrible monsters. A classic drive-in schlocker. Irish has legs like a 57 Chevy. Classic.

GIANT FROM THE UNKNOWN (1957) Edward Kemmer, Sally Fraser, Morris Ankrum, Bob Steele. A group of research scientists head for the mountains. There they discover that certain radioactive properties within the soil have remarkably preserved many of the ancient remains they uncover. Also preserved and very much alive is a giant, legendary conquistador who frees himself from his grave and goes on a maniacal rampage.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 29 (No. DI-29)

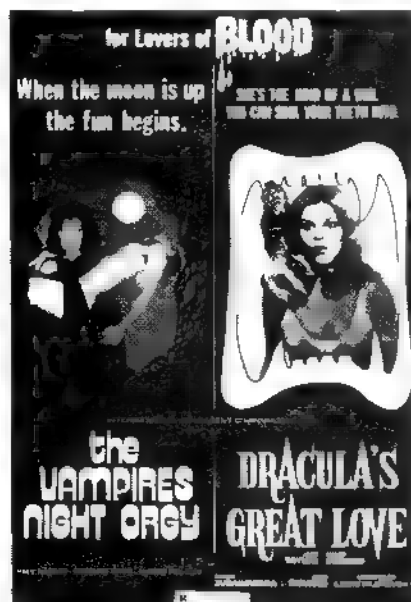
FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER (1958) Donald Murphy. John Ashley, Sandra Knight, Sally Todd. A drive-in movie here ever was one. Frankenstein's grandson comes on the family business, experimenting on young, teenage girls and by creating a gossamer female monster in the basement of his home. The climax features one of the best "acid in his face" shots ever filmed.

MISSILE TO THE MOON (1958) Richard Travis, Gary Clarke, Laurie Mitchell, Cathy Downs. Aremake of one of Astor Pictures' earlier sci-fi schlockers, **CAT WOMEN OF THE MOON**. There's a few different plot twists thrown in, including monstrous lunar rock men who threaten our heroes. Our print contains the often cut scene of the astronaut being burnt to a crisp by the sun's rays.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 30 (No. DI-30)

COUNT DRACULA'S GREAT LOVE (1972) Paul Naschy. Vic Winner, Ingrid Garbo. A beautiful color print of what may very well be Naschy's best film. Dracula is visited in his castle by a group of gorgeous, (and often quite topless) babes which he proceeds to vampirize in the usual manner. However, he longs for one of them to come to him of her own free will. Very brutal, and bloody in places. Our print is the completely uncensored American theatrical release version.

THE VAMPIRE'S NIGHT ORGY (1973, aka **ORGY OF THE VAMPIRES**) Jack Taylor, John Richard. While traveling through the countryside, a bus full of tourists stops in a small European town. To their horror they discover that all of the villagers are bloodthirsty vampires. An interesting Spanish horror film. Directed by Leon Klimovsky, who often did Paul Naschy's vehicles.



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 31 (No. DI-31)

THE WITCH'S CURSE (1962) Kirk Morris, Heleine Chaner. Directed by Ricardo Freda. Morris plays Maciste in this fantasy horror film about an excursion to hell. Maciste must find the damned spirit of an ancient witch in order to free her descendant from a centuries old curse. Set in Scotland.

COLOSSUS OF THE ARENA (1960) Mark Forest, Scilla Gabe. The setting is ancient Rome in the 4th century. Forest plays a mighty gladiator named Robur, who uncovers a plot to imprison a beautiful young princess. He exposes an evil duke as the perpetrator through a series of spectacular feats and combats.

Double Horror-Science Show

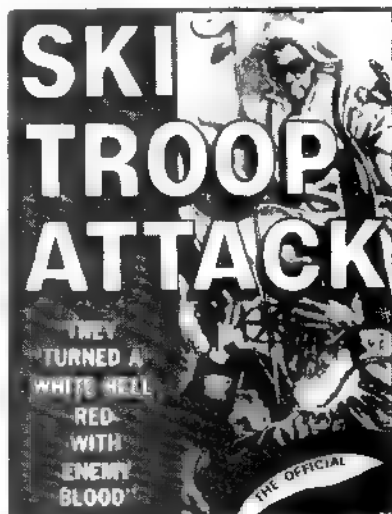
TERROR STALKS! HALF MONSTER HALF MAN!



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 32 (No. DI-32)

SK. TROOP ATTACK (1959) Michael Forest, Sheila Carol, Wally Campo, Roger Corman. Shot at the same time and with the same cast and crew as **BEAST FROM HAUNTED CAVE**. Corman produced, directed, and played a Nazi commander on skis in this WWII thriller. Just like all of Roger's other sci-fi/horror films except they're fighting Nazis instead of monsters.

BATTLE OF BLOOD ISLAND (1959) Ron Kennedy, Richard Devon. In the final days of WWII, a pair of U.S. soldiers are stranded on a remote island in the Pacific. They struggle and fight to stay alive under almost impossible conditions. Shot on location in the Caribbean by Roger Corman's filmgroup company at the same time he was filming **LAST WOMAN ON EARTH** and **CREATURE FROM THE HAUNTED SEA**.



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 33 (No. DI-33)

MANBEAST (1956) Rock Madson, Lloyd Nelson, Virginia Maynor, George Skaff. A man and a woman arrive in the Himalayas to search for the woman's missing brother. They're confronted by a strange guide and a murdering pack of abominable snowmen which the guide claims to be a descendant of. Not bad for a Jerry Warren film.

PREHISTORIC WOMEN (1950) Allan Nixon, Laurette Luez, Mara Lynn. This classic lurkey was brought out of mothballs six years after its original release just so it could fill the lower berth of a double bill with **MANBEAST**. Prehistoric babes battle against giants and dragons during ancient times. All in glorious cinecolor. Some truly hysterical moments.



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 34 (No. DI-34)

SWAMP WOMEN (1956) Beverly Garland, Marie Windsor, Michael "Touch" Connors, Carole Matthews. A seedy group of female convicts kidnap a young hunk, (played by Connors), and drag him through the swamp while searching for a fortune in hidden diamonds. The girls fight over Connors and with each other in this schlocky exploitation thriller directed by Roger Corman. Garland looks hot in cut-offs. Lots of Gators and tough babes. Now mastered from a nice color print.

GUNSLINGER (1956) John Ireland, Beverly Garland, Allison Hayes. This Roger Corman western is worth watching if only to see two of the most gorgeous B-movie babes that ever lived. (Garland & Hayes) in one movie together. Garland inherits the job of sheriff from her dead husband, while Hayes plays a landscaper hustler who who hirs. Ireland to bump off Beverly. Nice color.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 35 (No. DI-35)

BATTLE OF THE WORLDS (1962) Claude Rains, Bill Carter, Maya Brent. Enjoyable sci-fi with Rains in one of his final roles as Professor Benjamin, who leads a space expedition against a computer-run, dead planet that's hurtling headlong towards the Earth. Great special effects for its time. Mastered from a gorgeous color print.

ATOM AGE VAMPIRE (1962) Alberto Lupo, Susanne Lorent, Sergio Fantoni. A car accident leaves a beautiful nightclub dancer with a horribly disfigured face. She takes refuge in the house of a mad scientist who restores her beauty by murdering young girls and extracting their glands. He shoots up and transforms into a monster whenever he goes out on a killing. An odd drive-in standard.



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 36 (No. DI-36)

GIRL ON A CHAIN GANG (1965) William Watson, Julie Aring. An outrageous exploitation film made the year after the civil rights workers were murdered in Mississippi. A white guy, a black guy, and a white girl are falsely arrested, abused, and even unjustly murdered by redneck, southern police. Very entertaining and totally engrossing in a sleazy way.

TEENAGE MOTHER (1966) Ariane Sue Farber, Frederick Ricci. A young teacher arrives at a small town high school to teach (gasp!) sex education. Later, a young teenage babe tells her boyfriend she's pregnant so he'll marry her. There's a rumble at a drive-in theater (they're showing **GIRL ON A CHAIN GANG**), hot rod races, go go dancers, angry parents, and to top the entire proceedings off, we're shown a close up of an actual birth complete with forceps. Absolutely astounding.

THIS OFFER ABSOLUTELY ENDS AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT NOVEMBER 30, 1991!

SLEAZEMANIA; SLEAZEMANIA STRIKES BACK; SLEAZEMANIA III Rhino Video (approx. 60 min. each) See Rhino ad on page 39)

Sleaze, that amusing but thoroughly disreputable aspect of pop culture, is a lot like junk food—in small doses, it's big fun, but if you indulge in too much at one sitting, you're going to regret it. Rhino Video's three-volume Sleazemania collection of exploitation-movie clips and preview trailers offers more bad acting, pendulously breasted women, crummy production values, ugly men, dopey violence, dirty feet, and adolescent attitudes toward sexuality than any responsible adult can be expected to deal with. At about an hour apiece, these eye-opening videos are as numbing as they are entertaining.

Let's establish up front that the tapes in this collection, particularly *Sleazemania III*, are best viewed by grownups. Much of what is on view is old-fashioned titillation that's just campy by modern standards, but a number of clips are from soft-core porn films of the 1960s and '70s, with plenty of frontal female nudity and simulated sex. There are chuckles and even a dash of historical value here, but Billy and Sally should be safely tucked in their beds before you fire up the VCR.

Probably the rarest items on the tapes and certainly the only ones that might be called "cute" are full-color peep show reels from the 1950s. These one or two-minute



films were intended to be viewed in 25-cent increments in penny arcades and similar hotbeds of culture. There's very little nudity in these—mainly lots of leg and acres of cleavage. In one mini-epic entitled *Diana* (ostensibly produced "for art students"), a zaftig young lovely has car trouble on a lonely mountain road, hugs herself in mock dismay, and bends toward the camera so frequently that her breasts threaten to plummet into the viewer's lap. Finally, she attracts a passing motorist, a newlywed who tosses his bride out onto the gravel road in order to make room for our heroine. Who says men don't know how to be thoughtful and considerate?

Other genuine obscurities pop up throughout the videos. Volume I, for instance, offers legendary stripper Tempest Storm, who's glimpsed in a brief clip from

an unidentified striptease film of the 1950s. The same volume includes the trailer from *Pin-Down Girls* (c. 1953), the story of "gorgeous girl wrestlers"; as in all of his Z-movie appearances, the late Timothy Farrell is earnest but unconvincing. In Volume III, you'll thrill to hopelessly inept footage from *Dance Hall Racket* (1953), a set-bound melodrama featuring Lenny Bruce. If you thought Ed Wood's production values were rock-bottom, wait'll you get a load of the cheesy nightclub set and ugly lighting on display here.

Speaking of Mr. Wood, Volumes I and II offer a generous sample of the work of everybody's favorite auteur. The ubiquitous Timothy Farrell snarls nastily in the trailer for *Jail Bait* (1954) and Bela Lugosi is all-knowing in priceless clips from *Glen or Glenda?* (1953; identified here by one of its alternate titles, *I Changed My Sex*). Much of the *Glen or Glenda?* footage is taken from the film's bizarre dream sequence, in which a Marilyn Monroe wannabe luxuriates on the world's ugliest sofa, and a frizzy-haired gal with hips wider than the front end of a '51 Nash does a striptease dance.

TV psychic Criswell, another member of the Ed Wood stock company, presides over the nudie-cutie *Orgy of the Dead* (1965), scripted by Wood and recommended if only for the presence of a fabulously attractive young dancer named

Continued on page 24

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THE BUSTER KEATON SHOW In 1951 Buster had his own syndicated show half hour show. The first episode features Buster in a classic remake of one of his silent shorts about a haunted house. The other is a hilarious spoof of the Old West. (Approx. 60 min.) **Price: \$24.95**

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IS EVERYBODY LISTENING? This *March of Time* production is a report on the state of radio broadcasting in the mid-40s, from Lee DeForest to the soaps. Plus "The Football Fan," a radio comedy with Tom Ewell (30 min.) **Price: \$19.95**

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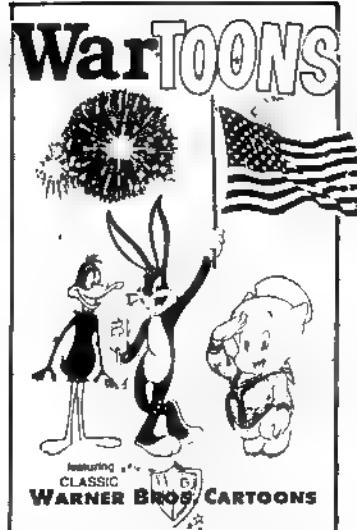
EDGAR BERGEN & CHARLIE MCCARTHY (The Lost Coke Specials) Not seen since the early '50s, this duo of lost Coke TV specials features Edgar and Charlie's very first television appearance in the delightfully amusing "Thanksgiving Show" - plus plenty of spooktacular entertainment after midnight when the boys decide to spend a haunted night in "The Ghost Town." Also featuring special appearances by Mortimer Snerd (Approx. 60 min.) **Price: \$24.95**

TV QUIZ SHOWS (Vol. 1): "Do You Trust Your Wife?" Hosted by Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, this right-hearted game show awarded \$100/week for a year to winning couples. Ironically one contestant is also a ventriloquist. PLUS "Who Do You Trust?" Emcee Johnny Carson and announcer Ed McMahon replaced Bergen in 1957 (also slightly altering the program's title). When Carson left, it was to take over the *Tonight Show* (60 min.) **Price: \$24.95**

TV QUIZ SHOWS (Vol. 2) "I've Got A Secret" Hosted by Gary Moore, this program was considered one of the most successful quiz shows in the history of television. The special guests in this episode celebrated 50 years of Hollywood moviemaking. PLUS "Break the Bank" Bert Parks emceed this "big money" (\$10,000) quiz show from the '50s with questions that could be hard, and contestants selected from the studio audience (60 min.) **Price: \$24.95**

TV QUIZ SHOWS (Vol. 3) "You Bet Your Life" Hosted by the one and only Groucho Marx, this classic quiz show was taped in an hour-long session, then edited down to 27 minutes because of Groucho's often-risque remarks. PLUS "People Are Funny" Contestants participate in outrageous stunts, hosted by Art Linkletter which could often end in a pie throwing contest or a dunking (60 min.) **Price: \$24.95**

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WAR-TOONS During WW2, the easiest doses of propaganda came from the animated cartoon. Viewed outside of their historical perspective, these cartoons may be offensive to some. Included in this rare war-time sampling are the influential "Victory Through Air Power," the notorious Private Snafu shorts, plus a sampling of Looney Toons featuring "Nipponews" and "Flashes From the Axis" as well as the downright nasty "Tokio Joww" (52 min.) **Price: \$24.95**

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COLGATE VARIETY HOUR Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy host the 1955 grand opening of the Beverly Hills Conrad Hilton Hotel, while hostess Hedda Hopper (sometimes fawning, sometimes extremely rude) talks with dozens of Hollywood celebrities including Walt Disney, Mamie Van Doren, Charlton Heston, Bob Cummings, Richard Boone, Audie Murphy and many others (Approx. 60 min.) **Price: \$24.95**

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Mickey Jines. Onetime Republic stuntman Kenne Duncan shows up in the feverish trailer for *The Sinister Urge*, Wood's 1961 raveout against the dirty-picture business—a film that includes this priceless line from police lieutenant Duncan: "Show me a crime, and I'll show you a picture that coulda caused it!" Other lawbreakers do their thing in the trailer from *The Violent Years* (1956), an all-girl jd thriller ("adolescent gangsters taking their thrills unashamed!") that Wood wrote but did not direct. Pop culturists will note that pretty star Jean Moorehead was the *Playboy* Playmate for October 1955.

Many of Wood's scripts are informed by a hollow piousness that pretends to stand up for traditional values, even as the films titillate us with sensationalized sex and violence. In this sense, Wood's output is very much an extension of the completely hypocritical "social conscience" melodramas that flourished in the '30s and '40s and continued to be made into the 1960s. *Reefer Madness* (1936) is probably the best-known; clips from others are included in the Sleazemania collection, including *Marihuana: Weed with Roots in Hell* (c. 1936), an early anti-drug film that isn't above tossing in some footage of a nude beach party. The "shocking but true" story of *Curfew Breakers* (1957) exposes the sordid activities of wild teenagers who stay up past ten o'clock, while *The Flesh Merchant* (1955) and *Vice Dolls*

(c. 1957) reveal the shocking fates of heedless young girls who sell their bodies for money.

The 1960s allowed a boldness that expressed itself not only in terms of how much flesh could be displayed, but in unprecedented levels of violence and general nastiness. Enter the opportunistic producer/director Herschell Gordon Lewis, who is represented on volumes I and II with trailers from *The Psychic* (1968), *Just for The Hell Of It* (1968), *She-Devils on Wheels* (1968, "Man-Eaters on Motorcycles!"), *This Stuff'll Kill Ya!* (1971), and his two most famous films, *Blood Feast* (1963) and *2000 Maniacs* (1964).

Lewis' constant juxtaposition of sex and gory violence set the tone for much of the exploitation-film output of the '60s, but not all low-rent filmmakers embraced his brand of roughness. The traditional approach continued to hang in there, as evidenced by three trailers on Volume I: *Strange Rampage* (c. 1966; featuring Ann Howe "and her 48s"), *Jail Bait Baby Sitter* (c. 1969; "What she'll do for you can get you 25 long years!"), and a pricelessly funny, very long trailer for *The Smut Peddler* (c. 1965), which gleefully promises that you'll "backpedal to the lower depths of depravity!"

We could go on and talk about H. G. Lewis' *Suburban Roulette* (1967), *Teenage Cruisers* (1977; starring Serena and the world's worst Elvis impersonator), *The Girl from S.I.N.* (1966; the exploits of agent 0069 aka Poontang Plenty), and that

dream-movie for lovers of cellulite, *Mr. Mari's Girls* (c. 1967), but—urp!—just writing about these junk-food videos is equivalent to chowing down about nine or ten White Castle hamburgers. We need a break, but if your appetite is bigger than ours, the "Sleazemania" collections may be just your meat.

—David J. Hogan

FORTY ACRE FEUD (1965) Color, Directed by Ron Ormond. With Ferlin Huskey, Del Reeves & Minnie Pearl (See ad on page 49)

The cars would come—great, long lines of them, winding toward the drive-in theaters in the Dixietwilight Badly sprung old Chevys, battered pickups, dusty Fords. Some with young couples, many with families, infants included. The people who made up this vast Southern audience came to the drive-ins on sultry summer nights to be entertained. Pure and simple. Filmmakers clever enough to tap into this audience's needs could prosper. One such filmmaker was Ron Ormond, and his 1965 film, *Forty Acre Feud*, was designed expressly for Dixie tastes.

At 85 minutes, the movie is not short, and I admit to having fired up the VCR with a small sense of dread.

I owe someone an apology. The 85 minutes passed not just quickly, but fairly pleasantly. I enjoyed the country music and was surprised to discover that singers Ferlin Huskey and Del Reeves were, as actors, competent and appealing. I even

Continued on page 26

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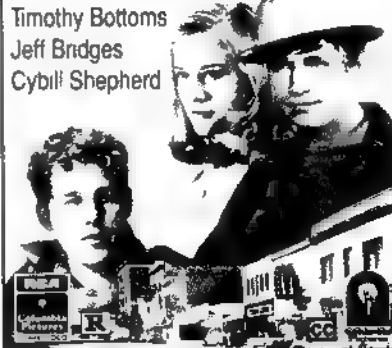


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laughed out loud a few times. Had I shelled out a few bucks to take the family to the drive-in to see the picture back in 1965, I wouldn't have driven home unsatisfied.

As the film's title implies, *Forty Acre Feud* is about a bunch of country folk who don't get along too well. Y'see, down in Shagbottom, USA, there's the Culpeppers and there's the Calhouns. Oh, the enmity between them is fierce and long standing. Of course, nobody on either side knows exactly *why* all the feudin' and fussin' is going on, but, well, the feud gives everybody something to occupy their minds.

Del Culpepper (Del Reeves) is a quiet, musically inclined young man who loves Nancy Calhoun (Jan Moore). Romeo and Juliet-like, the romance spells trouble for everybody. Of even greater import is that the federal government has discovered that Shagbottom has been passed over during apportionment, and that the community must now elect a state representative. Foxy Calhoun tosses his hat into the ring, so Paw Culpepper decides to do the same. Uh oh.

Fortunately, things are kept more or less civilized by a welcome distraction, the telecast of the Smoky Mountain Jamboree show from the big barn, right in Shagbottom. With this element we come to the *raison d'être* of *Forty Acre Feud*: an excuse to showcase one statically shot musical

Continued on page 34



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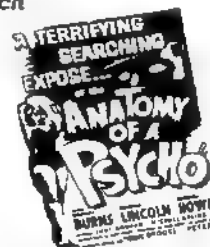
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THE WILD ANGELS, Soundtrack from the Motion Picture, Tower Records T 5043, 1966, Out of Print. Sugg. Value: \$20-\$35.

THE WILD ANGELS, VOL. II, Tower Records T 5056, 1966, Out of Print. Suggested Value: \$20-\$35.

The Wild Angels, the first of Roger Corman's docudramas based on the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang, was part of AIP's exploitation/biker/sleaze package of the mid-'60s. The film starred Peter Fonda, Nancy Sinatra, Bruce Dern, Diane Ladd along with actual members of the Venice, California chapter of the Hell's Angels. (See "Cycle Cinema" article, p. 52.) Since its release, both the picture and its two vol-

umes of soundtrack music have gained cult status among biker film fans.

The Wild Angels is a "cycle-delic" rock extravaganza featuring Davie Allan and the Arrows, the Hands of Time and the Visitors, with heavy emphasis on instrumentals. "Theme from The Wild Angels (Instrumental)" is an up-tempo surf-rock over laid with the roar of reved-up hogs for additional ambience. This track also features the trademark sounds of Allan's fuzz-box lead guitar. Next up is the vocal version of the "Theme from the Wild Angels" by The Visitors, a popish, Shirelles-meet-Dick Dale track.

"Lonely in the Chapel," by The Hands of Time, is an Elvis-inspired ballad sung by a sincere Elvis impersonator, complete with melodramatic speech in the middle of the song. Next, two instrumentals, "The Chase" and "Bongo Party," borrow the distinctive drum style of the Surfariis ("Wipeout") and the Chantays ("Pipeline"), played on tenor toms with a bongo solo on "Bongo Party" that breaks down exactly like "Wipeout," complete with guitar accents. "The Chase" has an ascending bass riff that duets with the drums and guitar to create a "psychedelic" drone, (also heard in "The Wild Angels Ballad [Dirge]"). Other standout tracks on the first volume are "The Lonely Rider" and "The Unknown Rider," both lush with tremolo guitar.

The Wild Angels, Vol. II puts even more emphasis on instrumentals. Although the album opens with "Blues Theme," a vocal by The Hands of Time, this second offering is dominated by Davie Allan and the Arrows' instrumentals.

Of special interest is "The Loser's Burial" which blends an early Byrds-style rhythm guitar with lead guitar sounds similar to the surfer classic "The Lonely Bull," setting the mood for a somber biker burial. At the other end of the musical spectrum, "Wild Orgy" mixes its music with the sounds of pagan sex rites, powered by Olympia beer, amphetamines, mescaline, cheap grass and wine. The lead vocal is taken by a biker babe who sounds like she's had one too many of the afore-



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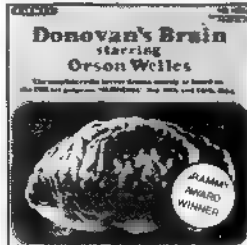
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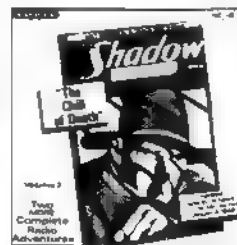
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(Not the Orson Welles) **WAR OF THE WORLDS**: The Lux Radio Theatre production originally heard Feb. 8, 1955. Stars Dana Andrews, Pat Crowley and William Conrad. Order No: 101



BORIS KARLOFF in the INNER SANCTUM: Two different Inner Sanctums, "Birdsong for a Murderer" and "The Wailing Wall." Extra: The Black Chapel (January 6, 1939) "The Mahogany Coffin" with Ted Osborne. Order No: 125



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SUSPENSE!: Peter Lorre and Vincent Price star in two complete terror tales. Lorre is featured in "Till Death Do Us Part," a *Suspense* story from December of 1942. Plus Vincent Price in "Blood Bath," from the 1950 series *Escape*. Order No: 41

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mentioned substances, but combined with the soundtrack and dialogue from the film, the whole thing works

For those who like moody guitars, "Losers Lament" is an interesting listen, while "Arriba" travels south of the border for its inspiration. "Makin' Love is Fun" is listed as an instrumental, but is actually a vocal. (In fact, the song selection listings on both albums are inaccurate. Vol. I rearranges the song order and Vol. II has vocals listed as instrumentals.) "The Dark Alley" features a creepy vibrato guitar, a snappy snare drum beat, and a brain-fried organ chord finale. "Cycle Party" is another "Wipeout" rework with a "Teen Beat" drum solo

Both of these albums were produced by then-20-year-old Mike Curb (who also wrote the motorcycle jingle, "You meet the nicest people on a Honda," which he later developed into the 1964 commercial hit "Little Honda" by the Hondells, and again by the Beach Boys.) Curb formed Sidewalk Productions, scoring all the soundtracks for AIP's youth-oriented films, including *Riot on the Sunset Strip* and *Psych-Out*.

Both *The Wild Angels* soundtrack albums are recommended for fans of biker/psychedelia/sleaze cinema of the '60s and early '70s, but we would encourage the purchase of these records only when found at a reasonable price. Let the biker beware.



DEVIL'S ANGELS Tower Records DT 5074, 1967, Out of Print. Sugg. Value: \$20 - \$35.

19 67 was a memorable year for Tower Records (a subsidiary of Capitol Records). Concurrent with their release of Pink Floyd's "Piper at the Gates of Dawn," the soundtrack for the AIP biker flick *Devil's Angels*, starring John Cassavetes, also cycled into record stores.

Side one of the soundtrack kicks off with the title tune, "The Devil's Angels," vocalized by Jerry and the Portraits and backed by the sonic arsenal of Davie Allan and the Arrows, is reminiscent of the '60s pop-rock group The Association, only this time in hyperdrive, fueled by Allan's now-familiar fuzz guitar. His licks are similar to those that Allan used in the pyrotechnic

lead for *Wild Angels*.

The second cut, "The Devil's Rumble" by the Arrows, revs up with an ascending chord progression by both the bass and guitar, while the rack toms and bass drum supply the percussion. It's too bad that a stronger drum track wasn't mixed into the arrangement, but in its defense, Allan's guitar lead tears up the vinyl on this one.

The next track, "Funky," sounds out of place, reminiscent of a gondolier floating on Venician canals. It's obviously mis-titled, making one wonder what it's doing on an album called *Devil's Angels*, but mercifully, the track lasts only 30 seconds.

"Make Believe Love" gets back into the groove with a solid bass guitar and a well-restrained lead. This surf-styled instrumental features a duet between trap drums and bongos—great for those late nights in your pad, man. "Cody's Theme," however, is more of a straight ahead guitar boogie. Finally, we get to hear Allan without the crazed fuzzbox, playing a great whammy-bar lead.

"Hell Rider" is one of the standout tracks on this L.P. This instrumental is a repeat of "Cody's Theme," but with a vocal track credited to The Arrows. More likely, it's Jerry and the Portraits, but the sleeve notes aren't clear. "Hole in the Wall" has an up-tempo surf beat with some quirky drum time changes, effective guitar chord mod-

Continued on next page

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WAX MUSEUM continued

ulations and vibrato lead. Davie Allan can play with the best of the surf bands, fuzz box or not.

"The Devil's Carnival" is a great biker "hurdy-gurdy" track, dominated by the keyboard. But "The Ghost Town" is a total freak show. This number could have been inspired by the Beatles' "Revolution Number Nine" except that "Ghost Town" came out a year before. Allan plays a psychedelic guitar lead, while the keyboardist slips into a Keith Jarrett progressive jazz mode and The Arrows all freak out like vintage 1969 King Crimson. This cut is so far out it's in. Pure psychedelia.

"The Devil's Angels" theme is finally reprised in a rugged guitar romp, a fitting end to one of the most musically satisfying of the AIP biker flick discs. If you're into '60s biker nostalgia, this album comes highly recommended.

THE HELLCATS (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack from the Crown International Pictures) Tower Records ST 5124 1967 Out of Print Suggested value: \$20 to \$35

Side one revs up with "The Hellcats" theme by The Arrows, a potent viable piece with progressive rock overtones. While maintaining its traditional "Americana" mood, this cut also foreshadows bands to come such as Emerson, Lake and Palmer and King Crimson, with plenty of flailing drums and vibrato guitar. The Arrows' next track, "The Angry Mob," however, is a disappointment—too much rhythm guitar, not enough lead, and a purely "filler" arrangement reminiscent of "Louie, Louie" and "Hang on Sloop."

Unfortunately, the album offers only two Davie Allan and the Arrows tracks. The remaining grooves are taken up by Somebody's Chyldren, the Sunrays, and Davy Jones and the Dolphins, who debut with "The Only Way to Fly," an ultimately for-

gettable cut that sounds like an outtake from Disney's "It's a Small World." Intended as a psychedelic romp, this tune sounds like bad Beach Boys with an over-echoed vocal and abysmal fuzz guitar.

Next, "The Marionettes" by Somebody's Chyldren is reminiscent of Syd Barrett's early tunes with Pink Floyd. Clever lyrics, pop-song organ hooks, well-balanced '60s harmonies, a nice "harpsichord" keyboard run, and a great sing-along chorus wrap-up make this a rewarding cut.

For the side's finale, Davy Jones and the Dolphins offer their version of "The Hellcats" theme, which is, unfortunately, an absolute stinker, despite a fairly decent keyboard solo. While credit for the musical supervision is given to Jerry Roberts, these tracks sound suspiciously like Mike Curb leftovers. Davy Jones and the Dolphins are competent at the sing-song arrangements, but one can only wish that Somebody's Chyldren and the Arrows has been the musical catalyst on this LP.

Side two opens with The Sunray's interpretation of "The Hellcats" theme, which sounds completely different from DJ&TD's arrangement. With a great ascending brass section, this track kicks off like "a bat out of hell" cats. With just enough hot-rod vocal, the melody is classic surfer sleaze/biker bizarro/bogie—a great take that's topped off with some "sock-it-to-me-delic" *Invaders from Mars*-type choral work at the end of the cut.

Continued on page 32

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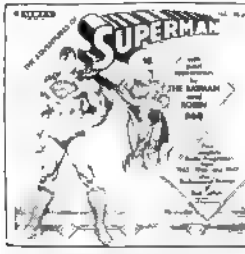
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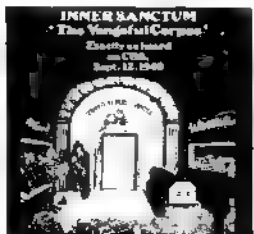
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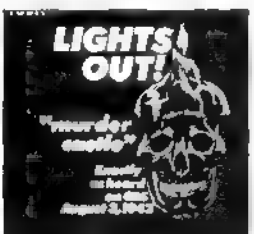
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WAX MUSEUM continued from page 30

Track two, side two, served up again by Davy Jones and the Dolphins, offers what could have been a great biker instrumental. Featuring a bitchin' base line, this cut, diffused by a dorky organ and a weak vocal whining about "Mass Confusion," quickly descends into an atonal nursery rhyme. Next, "I'm Up" by Somebody's Chyldren once again, is a slice of AIP-inspired Pink Floyd. Davy Jones and the Dolphins close out the side with "Let's Live a Little" and "Let's Take a Chance." It's a shame that the best songs by The Arrows, Somebody's Children and The Sunrays couldn't have been condensed into a five or six song EP, eliminating the DJ&TD cuts, which sound embarrassingly out of place on a biker soundtrack album where aggressive instrumentals and taut songwriting are essential.

-Reviews by Jan Alan Henderson

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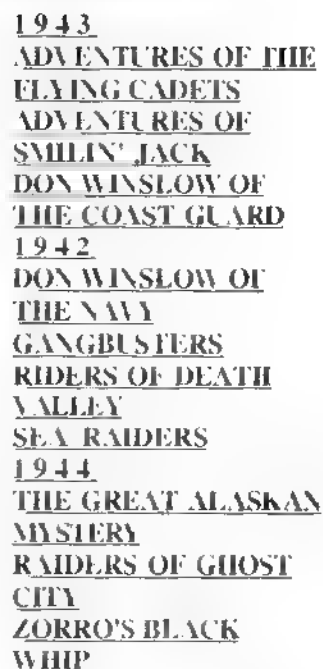
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THE MERMAIDS OF TIBURON This is one of my favorite B-Movies of the 1960's. In this 1962 film Diane Webster is a mermaid who helps hero George Rowen when a pearl expedition is beset by dirty work. Great underwater scenes, and is great fun. 85 minutes/BSW \$25.00

ONE STEP BEYOND-THE PROMISE (w/Original ABC-TV Commercials & ALOHA Opening) William Shatner stars as a former German bomber pilot in post-war London who defuses unexploded bombs! 30 Minutes/BSW \$17.50

VIDEOSCAN continued from page 26

number after another. Sound awful? Well, it's not, mainly because the musical guests include the likes of Bill Anderson, Ferlin Huskey, Ray Price, Skeeter Davis, and Roy Drusky. And two of the performers, George Jones and Loretta Lynn, are honest-to-goodness country music legends who should appeal even to people who think they don't like country music.

As you might expect, the songs are in the classic country tradition, the lyrics concerned with busted romances, truck drivin', moonshine, and gals who are "as mean as homemade sin." Ormond was no Vincente Minnelli, so his camera remains bolted to the floor during each number. Both good and bad, though, is the director's fondness for frequent close-ups, good because the close-ups break the visual monotony a bit and give us good looks at the singers, bad because many of the close-ups are cutaway shots to unappealing Shagbottomites who grin and nod in time to the music. Even stranger is that these audience-reaction closeups were shot against perfectly black backgrounds; floating in the void this way, some of the happy listeners resemble fun house apparitions.

By the time the musical numbers begin, the plot is no more than a device Ormond can cut to for brief bridges between songs. Just for the record, things do not wind up as badly for Del and Nancy as they did for the couple's Shakespearean counterparts, and Shagbottom does elect itself a representative. There is some mild comedy involved in all of this, and even some chaste smooching. Minnie Pearl, as Maw Culpepper, comments on the action with lines the caliber of, "Paw, ya got grease on yer chin," and "Never b'lieve what you hear, and only half of what you see."

Minnie is fun and Del Reeves is low-key and likeable, but Ferlin Huskey manages to walk off with everything in a dual role, as himself, and as Simon, a perpetually grinning cracker who's a friend of Del's. With his askew baseball cap, idiot's chuckle, and habit of scratching the right side of his face by passing his left arm over the top of his head, Simon is a gene-pool hybrid of Huntz Hall and Gomer Pyle. I have no defense, he made me laugh.

Forty Acre Feud probably gave Dixie audiences exactly what they expected, and wanted: lots of music and a few simple laughs. It's a transparent little picture, but at least it takes the high road to exploitation. In this instance, Ormond was no Herschell Gordon Lewis, intent upon stirring an audience's blood with bludgeoning shock or nudity. Instead, he offered clean, decent entertainment—a true family picture. If cynicism was involved in the film's creation, it's not readily apparent. That's refreshing.

—David J. Hogan

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Raquel Welch at the peak period of her beauty is the unobtainable object of desire driving antique dealer Marcello Mastroianni into a frenzy of erotic passion and obsession. A prime example of 60's psychedelic European cinema.
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Catherine Deneuve catapulted to stardom in Roman Polanski's acclaimed psychological thriller playing a flawlessly beautiful but sexually repressed girl whose neurotic fixations lead to mental deterioration and murder.
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ROMAN POLANSKI'S
REPULSION

INGA (1967)

Marie Llandahl is the virginal 17 year old who comes to live with her free thinking Aunt when her parents are killed in an accident. While there, she becomes infatuated with the Aunt's younger lover and blossoms into womanhood.
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TIGER AND THE PUSSYCAT (1967)

Wildcat Ann Margret provides the temptation for middle-aged and married businessman Vittorio Gassman in this sly and satirical sex comedy from the era of "what-ever turns you on." VCR alert for the shower scene
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GIRL WITH A SUITCASE (1960)

Claudia Cardinale is a girl from the wrong side of the tracks who follows her ex-boyfriend to the big city only to fall in love with his adolescent brother. Leonard Maltin calls it "well acted, worth-seeing."
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A teenage Brigitte Bardot is the not-so-innocent daughter of a notorious crime boss in this saucy French comedy. When she's forced to go into hiding, her untamed nature becomes a nightmare for her appointed male guardian.
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IT TAKES A THIEF (1960)

Jayne Mansfield and Anthony Quayle team up as a gangland leader and her spurned lover who are brought together once again during the planning of a big heist in London. A taut, no frills, "film noir" rarity.
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TOO HOT TO HANDLE (1960)

Jayne Mansfield's practically transparent evening gown and bodacious figure immortalized this film in the pages of "Playboy". Here she portrays a singer in a seamy night club populated by bad guys like Christopher Lee.
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An Undeniable Interview with

Johnny Legend

All he is saying... is give sleaze a chance

He's the Howard Hughes of Schlock, the Sultan of Sleaze, the Emperor of the Off-Beat, the King of Kinky. Who is he? He's Johnny Legend, Rhino Video's resident raconteur of the outre', the man who, almost single-handedly, has elevated exploitation films to a new level of raised-eyebrow respectability.

In his own way, Legend is a kind of film archaeologist, digging up dusty, long forgotten prints of some of the world's most bizarre cinematic relics. After hooking up with Rhino he has produced such obscure oddities as *High*

School Caesar, *Orgy of the Dead*, and *The Violent Years*, not to mention sexio-subversive party tapes like *Sleazemania*; *Sleazemania Strikes Back*; *The Good, The Bad, and The Sleazy*. Then there's *Dope Mania*, *Weird Cartoons* and the ever-popular educational video Rhino's *Guide to Safe Sex*. In the world of psychomondotronic films, Johnny is, indeed, (cough) a Legend.

So the first question on this editor's mind, after sampling Legend's amazing collection was: Where the hell did this guy come from?

Interview by
JAN ALAN HENDERSON

LEGEND: I was born in, what I like to call Ritchie Valens' home town, San Fernando, California, and I've been collecting stuff my whole life. I started with comic books when I was about three, but as I got older, it was films. We had two theaters in town that, when they fell on hard times, would go into a horror cycle and show three horror movies for 15 cents. Sometimes, they did that for a year or two at a time.

Coincidentally, I happened to be living in the same town that Tor Johnson lived in. One Sunday afternoon at the theater, Tor made an appearance in the middle of *The Unearthly*. It was a packed house, and all of a sudden there's this big furor in the back of the theater. I looked up and there's Tor in the back with a flashlight in his face and a couple of ushers leading him down the aisle. It was unbelievable! There wasn't any stage, because it was just a small town theater, so he came all the way down one aisle, across the front of the theater, then all the way back up the other aisle. I knew who he was instantly.

FAX: When did you move to Hollywood?
LEGEND: I've been shuttling back and forth between here and Venice for the last 10 or 15 years. I was in Venice briefly during the early '70s, then, came back to the Garden Court in '75 or '76. [Garden Court was a famous apartment hotel in the '30s and '40s on Hollywood Boulevard. In its decline it became a refuge for runaways, and has since been torn down.] After it went under, a memorable scene in *Death Wish II* was shot there. It showed all those people living there with rats and everything in the abandoned lobby. That was the actual lobby. That's where I was living in the '70s.

At that point I was still making Teen-

Photo ©1988 Randy Meyers



Johnny Legend attempts to communicate with Peter Lorre on Hollywood Boulevard's Walk of Fame.

Photos for this article courtesy of Rhin Video, Dan Gaiden and Randy Meyers



Johnny Legend relaxes at one of his favorite haunts, the Hollywood Book and Poster Shop.

Age Cruisers [Legend's "adult" film starring Tony Caan, the late John Holmes and the sizzling Serenal. I had the Rockabilly Rebels back then, which was five or ten years before that style of music really became popular. I play rhythm guitar, when I have to, and harmonica. I used to play electric autoharp, and I sometimes pull it back out of the cobwebs.

FAX: So, how did you hook up with Rhino?
LEGEND: They've been a record company for 12 years. We got acquainted initially through *Pencil Necked Geek*, which I wrote and produced.

FAX: Featuring the '50s wrestling legend, Freddy Blassie....

LEGEND: Right. That project took several years to consummate. We thought of it in the early '70s, when Freddy Blassie was living in New York. He still is, but then he was only coming here maybe once a year. It took two different instances of him coming into town, six months apart, to get it right. We formed our own label called Raunchy Talk Records.

The record had been out for several months and was really big on the Dr. Demento show. Then it got to the point where we couldn't do much more with it as an independent label. Rhino had already put one of the cuts, "Blassie, King of Men," on their first Rhino compilation. So we decided to put out the EP again on blood-red vinyl, 12-inch size. We also went back and added a few extra things. At that point I'd managed to shoot a couple of scenes with Blassie, that were going to be added to *Teen-Age Cruisers*, but they never got in. I did at least get them shot, with Blassie and Tony Caan and some other people. So, I had a bunch of weird locker-room inter-

view-type stuff of Blassie ranting and raving. We told him he could say whatever he wanted. It came out pretty obscene.

FAX: You met Harold Bronson and Richard Foose while re-doing that EP.

LEGEND: We got to be better and better friends. Not long after that, I talked about putting out *Teen-Age Cruisers* soundtrack albums. It was a great excuse to put out a greatest hits type of package.

FAX: What was your first video project for Rhino?

LEGEND: I wanted to start a series of exploitation/horror movies on video tape. Actually, I'd mapped out about 30 of those with various titles and campaigns. I believe in the old school philosophy of coming up with the title and campaign first. You treat it just like it's out, imagine it in the movie section, put it on the rack in the video stores, follow it through to the last round of a triple bill in a non-existent theater. Then, if it all makes sense, do it.

FAX: The Sam Katzman philosophy....

LEGEND: Yeah! That's when Andy Kaufman got involved with *My Breakfast with Blassie*. I was working with Blassie on a few more cuts for the record, plus trying to start the video thing, when Kaufman just appeared out of nowhere and started to hang around. *Taxi* was already on the air, so he was a star [as *Latka, the mechanic*], to a certain extent. Fred kept calling me up and asking who he was. I tried to explain.

FAX: How do you explain Andy Kaufman?
LEGEND: [Laughter] Andy was a really amazing guy. Actually, I think I had a better idea of what he was like before I met him. The better I got to know him—and I got to know him pretty well—the less I knew. Even Andy would have been hard pressed to explain what he was like.

FAX: Because his persona kept changing?

LEGEND: It's hard to say. He was one fascinating character. Authentic, though. He wasn't a put-on. He just did a lot of different things for strange reasons. Then he

started hanging around Fred, going to the wrestling matches, calling him up in the middle of the night. Fred began thinking, like a lot of people, that the guy was a little bit loose. So I would just try to explain Andy to Fred as best I could. But, as Fred put it, Andy's the kind of guy who likes Engelbert Humperdinck and porno stars. Kind of a square and proud of it.



Then, somewhere along the way Linda Latrec and I came up with an idea for a video from having to sit through *My Dinner with Andre* [1981]. We wanted to do something just as excruciating. So we came up with the opposite idea of Fred and someone else with him, eating

and talking. Now, that could be fascinating. We thought of Andy, because he'd been popping up lately. And it just all sort of fell together. I ran into Andy in New York, and within 48 hours, he decided to do *My Breakfast with Blassie*.

Along the way, though, I was trying to keep alive the idea of starting an exploitation/horror-type line of videos. Everyone was talking about video in 1978, so I kept talking to Rhino about following through, because they were thinking along the same lines. So we launched Rhino Video with that one title, *My Breakfast with Blassie*. We just boldly went out and did it, and we've been going on with it ever since.

FAX: Where did *Sleazemania* come from?

LEGEND: *Sleazemania* was culled from ten other things I was working on. After *My Breakfast with Blassie*, I needed another strong title, so I thought, this is perfect. It's original and we could put it out in this country. It became one of the first four releases, and may still be our most significant title.

Continued on next page



Comedian Joey Gaynor laughs as Johnny Legend explains one of his videos to Mr. Rhino, himself.

FAX: How many sequels are there now?
LEGEND: Actually, there are three 60-minute *Sleazemanias*. There's the original, then *Sleazeman Strikes Back*, then *Sleazeman III—The Good, The Bad and The Sleazy*. The one that has become our biggest seller is *Sleazeman—The Special Edition*. That's an interesting story.

Feedback from some video store owners was trickling back to me. They would show *Sleazeman* in the store, but when the really sleazy stuff came on, they had to



From top, Johnny Legend sits at the entrance to Bela Lugosi's chiropractor's office, where filmmaker/friend Ed D. Wood, Jr. would take the aging Lugosi to buy the drug methadone. Legend stands in front of Ed Wood's last residence.

shut it off so as not to offend the "general public" in the store. They asked, "Is there any way we can get highlights, or a 'safe' version of it?" What finally happened was that one guy said, "If you'll do a clean version of it, I'll take the first 500."

So I re-edited it to a version that I knew could be shown in any store, or on any TV station, without any trouble. All of a sudden, it was our biggest selling tape.

FAX: Where did you find these prints? From private collectors, rental agencies?
LEGEND: Originally, from Michael Sonye. [Michael Sonye, a.k.a. Dukey Flyswater, is a member of the shock/rock L.A. band, *Haunted Garage*.] Mike had a ton of this stuff. Also Eric Caiden. [Eric Caiden is the owner of Hollywood Book and Poster in Hollywood.] Jimmy Maslon also came up with some stuff [Jimmy Maslon is an independent producer, who produced *Blood Diner*.] At that point we were getting all the Herschell Gordon Lewis movies, so I used some of that. Fred Olen Ray also provided footage. [Fred Olen Ray is a producer/director, who has directed such films as *Cyclone*, *Death Corps*, *Bio Hazard*, and *Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers*.] I went around to everybody asking for anything they had, anything they could find. I was researching "public domain" movies like crazy, going through tons of films. I didn't want to use trailers, though. Originally, the clips from *2000 Maniacs* were going to be in the first *Sleazeman*, but the people who owned the film from video made a polite request that we not use them. So I took them out. I went for the sleazier, R-rated, Adults Only type of early '60s films.

FAX: How did *Night of the Living Commies* originate?

LEGEND: *Night of the Living Commies* started off pretty simply. I had always wanted to do something with *Red Nightmare*. I had seen it in the early '70s and just couldn't believe it existed. When I found out there was another half-hour propaganda short by Jack Webb called *The Code*, I grabbed both and put them together—I've always been

a big Jack Webb fan. The original title was actually, *The Commies are Coming*, the *Commies are Coming*. *Night of the Living Commies* came years later, when Jeff Valencia got involved with us. He's got an immense amount of amazing footage in a variety of categories.

FAX: Are *Rhino's Guide to Safe Sex* and *Dopeman* compilations from Jeff's collection.

LEGEND: Yes. I felt like I had been wallowing around in the wilderness over the years, when, suddenly, he came along with a whole new boatload of stuff.

FAX: In *Dope Mania*, there is a clip about the heroin addict.

LEGEND: That was from *The Narcotic*, *Pit of the Sphere*, one of those 30-minute, multipurpose educational films for high schools, with Kevin Tighe starring in it



That's shown with only a little bit taken out, maybe ten minutes or so. I tried to throw as much of that in as possible, because it was so good. I hate to cut any of this stuff, but if I didn't, each volume would run three hours or more and no one would be able to sit through it.

FAX: How did you come to find *High School Caesar*?

LEGEND: That's a long story. We knew it existed, but never

had seen it. We finally found a print of it through *Big Reel*. Years later, we eventually put it out. It took about three years before we managed to piece the deal together. Now it's part of the Rhino *Teen-Age Theater* series. *Naked Youth* is another film like that, something I might have seen on a double or triple bill at an early '60s matinee.

FAX: What about *Rock Baby, Rock It*?

LEGEND: That was made in Dallas in the '50s. I started hunting it down in the early '70s. We had posters on the wall, but we didn't know if there was still a print in existence. There was a period where we were convinced that Johnny Carrol [one of the stars of the film] was dead, but then we found out he was still alive. There were these stories about how he had gotten knifed on stage in a club after going out with some guy's girlfriend. It all proved completely erroneous. We found him, and years later he came out and recorded a new album. Finally UCLA showed a really terrible, butchered print seven or eight years ago. The people who owned it came out of the woodwork, and the elements ended up in the UCLA film archives. We

finally managed to make a deal for the world rights and got an original fine-grain master print.

FAX: At the 1988 Rhino film festival, you showed some outtakes from Ed Wood's *Glen or Glenda*? Where did those come from?

LEGEND: Somewhere along the way, Kingsley Candler found those [Kingsley Candler is a motion picture technician who specializes in nitrate restoration. He also plays bass in the *Haunted Garage* under the name "King Dinosaur."]. I know that they showed originally as part of the "Med-Vid's," Harry and Michael Medved's Golden Turkey shows at the Nuart in Los Angeles. One night when the place was totally sold out, Vampira couldn't even get in. They supposedly showed those clips. For the next few years, no one seemed to know where they were or what had happened to them. Then I got them. At the Nuart, I showed them separately from the film. By the time I got to San Francisco, I went back and incorporated them into the plot of the print. It actually looked OK.

FAX: Tell us about *Orgy of the Dead*.
LEGEND: I had been interested in Ed Wood at a very early age, 20 years before the Ed Wood revival. He seemed kind of impressed that I knew who he was.

FAX: You knew him?



At the Rhino Video 10th Anniversary Film Festival: top row, from left, comedian Joey Gaynor, actress Britt Morgan, Johnny Legend, Filmfax Special Consultant Jan Alan Henderson, Mike Sonye, Dave "Rocketeer" Stevens, actress/singer Yvette (Attack of the 50 Foot Woman) Vickers. Bottom row, kneeling, Eric (Hollywood Book and Poster Shop) Caiden, and Dino Lee. Photo by Dan Golden.

LEGEND: Yes. People always ask, was he in a dress? I say, no, I just remember him being there. He looks like a weird Errol Flynn cosmic character to me now. When I was a kid he looked more like an older man to me. I never thought of trying to get together with Ed Wood. I was working on a picture then, called *Sexual Sensory Perception*, which I probably shouldn't even mention. For some reason, I used that as an excuse to track down Steven Apostolof, who was trying to get *Orgy of the Dead* into release, re-titled as *Orgy Revenge*. I

finally found him one day, and said, "What can we do with the movie? Can we put it back in theaters?" He said, "Well, you tell me. What's the market now?" There wasn't even a repertory cinema thing going on then. At that time, Ed Wood was still totally unknown, so I couldn't promote it by saying, here's an Ed Wood movie! All I could say was, here's a movie with a werewolf in it. I could have tried for the horror audience, but I don't think it would really have made sense. So, I let it go for 10 years. FAX: But you eventually did release it.

LEGEND: Yeah. I went back and found Apostolof again, even reminded him of our "meeting" in the early '70s. That was a really great deal, because we went back to the original *Orgy* negative. A lot of people have noticed that the transfer on that particular video is just astounding.

FAX: What about *The Violent Years*?

LEGEND: I originally saw that film when I was in New York, during the same two week period when I was working with Blassie. There was a re-premiere of *Sinister Urge*, *Married Too Young*, and *Violent Years*. It was pointed out that Wood also wrote the script for *Married Too Young*. But I've never gotten that verified. I still don't know if they were just saying that because it made it a triple bill. It seems like an Ed Wood movie, but I've never heard for sure. I saw *Jail Bait* at another time. I also wanted to put *Violent Years* out on video. When we did the *Teen-Age Theater* series, we re-issued all of them again.

FAX: Mamie Van Doren was wonderful as the hostess of the *Teen-Age Theater* series. LEGEND: She'd been working for Rhino off and on for a few years. She also has an album out on Rhino.

FAX: Ken Osmond [Eddie Haskell on the '50s TV sitcom "Leave It to Beaver"] substituted for the ailing Mamie Van Doren at Rhino's Tenth Anniversary Film Festival. How did you come to know Ken Osmond?

LEGEND: This is a story that needs to be told in its entirety, because it's a story unto itself. But briefly, I was picked up for drunk driving one night back in the early

Continued on page 77

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THE ORMONDS

*They made exploitation
films the old-fashioned way.
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The Ormonds are people that Filmfax readers should know about. They are undoubtedly the first family of exploitation. But before you meet the family, we'd like to introduce you to June Ormond. She capsulized her early life in a letter to us last March. She is a helluva woman...

"**M**ay I thank you for agreeing to run the article on our family. I've had a very interesting life as the article attests and it only scratches the surface. I've trod the boards, as the lingo goes, with many of our big stars of the day and some remain in the limelight: Bob Hope, Edgar Bergen, Milton Berle, Dick Powell, Sophie Tucker—and I even had a very good interview with Ziegfeld who intended to give me a contract for his show after he saw me at the Palace Theater, but that is a long story.

Much water under the bridge. Then it was on to London where I appeared at the Palladium and four other theaters in London. I also met and danced with Prince Edward, the Prince of Wales at the Savoy. That I'll never forget. I can still feel his arms around me.

*Continued on
next page*

DEAR PATRON:

Due to the Unusual
Subject
of this
Motion Picture,
Words Cannot
Describe the
Contents...

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Yet **POTENT** in
its theme.

The Management.

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Present

**Please,
DON'T
TOUCH
ME!**

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Photos for this article courtesy of June and Tim Ormond



the Ormonds. Right, June and Ron Ormond, circa 1940.

THE ORMONDS continued

At the age of 25 I teamed with a young man named Joe Rollo and off we went into Vaudeville. Out to the West Coast and up to Seattle and Portland on the Bert Levy Circuit. It was at the Capitol theater in Portland where I met my husband. I went to see the show that followed ours and as I sat in the back of the theater, on walked the M.C., Rahn Ormond. I said to Jack Lawler, the owner of the theater, 'you see that guy up there? I've never seen him before in my life, but I'm going to marry him.' As fate would have it, we were married three weeks later.

We worked together for 43 years until Ron passed on in 1981. We did stage shows, motion pictures, road shows; ours was a happy life full of excitement and I was lucky to have had such a talented husband. Ron was a great writer and director. But I'm not through, as you can see. My son Tim and I continue to produce and distribute motion pictures. I intend to be like Bob Hope (84) and George Burns (in his 90's) and keep at our trade. I love show business and I thank you for running this article so others will know my story." Sincerely,
June Carr Ormond

Article by JIMMY MCDONOUGH

From the mid-Forties on, June, her husband Ron, and son Tim—known collectively as the Ormond Organization—have made movies. Ron produced, wrote, and directed the pictures; June was co-creator and often sole distributor; Tim was the next generation. The Ormond film genres include musicals, westerns, minstrel shows, down-home melodramas, and sex-gore shockers which they learned to exploit the hell out of. Then one day, the private plane, which Ron flew to promote the likes of *Girl from Tobacco Row*, went into a tailspin—emblematic of the Or-

monds' dissatisfaction with the "fast buck." The plane crashed, and the Ormonds emerged making exploitation pictures for Jesus. Show business was the Ormonds' life.

PROLOGUE

When June Ormond was 14, an agent came into the nightclub her mother ran in the basement of the Mayfair Theater at 47th and Broadway in New York City. "It was called Coffee Cliff's—Cliff was my father's name," June explained. "My parents were getting up in years and decided to retire from the road. So they opened this club right across the street from the Pal-

ace. When the agent saw me, he asked my mother if he could have me audition for the Paramount Circuit. The show was called '5-and 10-Cent Follies,' and the producer was Frank Capra. They signed me right away.

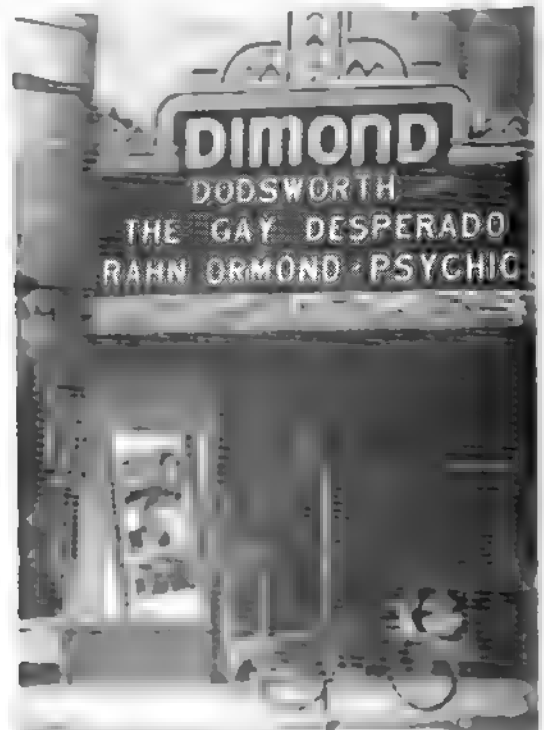
"My ace in the trade was comedy adagio—the MC would always look high class, top hat and tails, and would just stand there while I'd jump all over him catching my feet around him and doing ballet stuff. I worked with Bob Hope, Milton Berle, Ginger Rogers, Ethel Merman, all of them. I played six weeks at the Palladium in London and met the Duke of Wales and the Duke of York. I sat this close to Ziegfeld



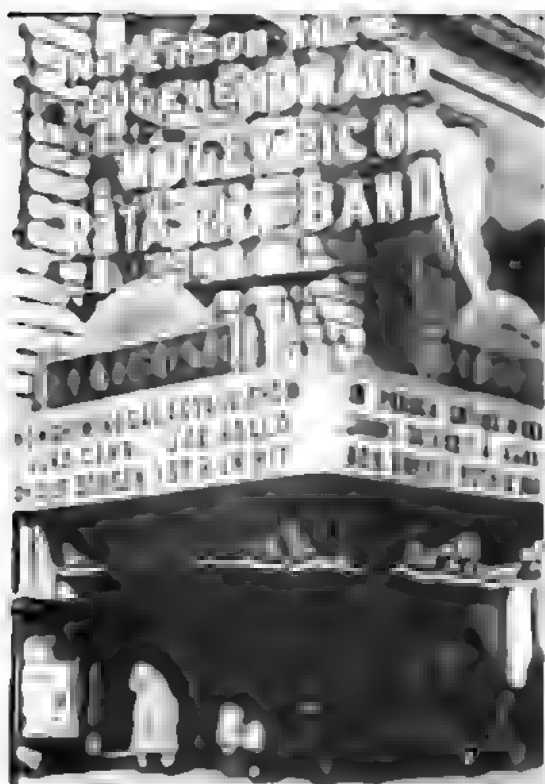
June Carr Ormond (crowning) with Virginia Verill and the Frazell Sisters in *Study and Understudy*. Opposite page, left, the marquee of the Flatbush Theater billed June Carr with partner Joe Rollo.



Above, lovely June Carr was only 18 in *Girl Crazy*. Inset: Nine year-old June in dancing school



Above, the Diamond Theater featured "psychic" Rahn



"So, I had a complete life before I met Ron at the age of 26."

THE WESTERNS

June put her years of show-biz know-how to work designing package shows with which she and Ron could travel the circuits. "My first show," June explained, "was called 'Chuckles.' There was a line of girls, a couple of acts, and three musicians—about 15 people all together. Ron was not quite good enough for the big time in New York City. I trained him while we did the show. See, if he had kept doing his magic the way he was when I married



(Ron) Ormond as starring in the "Midnight Spook Show."



From top, the audience literally lined up to see June Carr, Ron Ormond and the Eight "Chuckles" at the State Theater in Baltimore. (Claudette Colbert and Ray Milland also appeared on-screen in *Skylark*.) Center left, June Carr and Johnny Perkins do a comedy bit at the Capitol Theater in Washington, D.C. Center right, June shows a little leg in the stage comedy 'Sleep it Off.' Bottom, 28 year-old June practices the famous fan dance, which she reprised in *The Exotic Ones* (1968).

THE ORMONDS *continued*

him, he would never have gotten into comedy. We became very popular down South. I did all the booking and had four shows playing at a time."

Time off was spent in Hollywood, where June's parents had retired. Ron's mother, an Italian immigrant, lived in San Francisco. "She used to say to me," June recalled, "What have you got in mind? You don't want him to work. You want him to be a bum? I'd say, No, Mama. I want him to stay home and write the stories."

By chance, the Ormonds had settled into a Hollywood neighborhood rich with movie star cowboys like Roy Rogers, who lived right across the street. "One night," continued June, "about 10 o'clock, Ron and I were going to bed, and there was a knock on the door. Ron opened it, and there was this handsome fellow all dressed in black with a pretty girl on his arm. He said, 'Well, here I am! I'm Lash LaRue!' Ron said, 'So what?' And Lash said, 'I want to go on tour.' So Ron wrote him an act. He's still using that act after all these years! His real name is Alfred, you know, and he was a hairdresser prior to getting into movies—but he doesn't like anybody to talk about that."

As luck would have it, while on the road with Lash down South, Ron met Francis White and Joy Houck, Sr., two men already very powerful in the film business. Together they were known as Howco, and they owned the Consolidated Theater chain and controlled four exchanges: Jacksonville, Charlotte, Memphis, and Atlanta.

Ron pitched Howco Lash LaRue, his soon-to-be sidekick, Al 'Fuzzy' St. John, and the script, *Deadman's Gold*. "They bought the script from Ron for \$500," June stated. "Ron didn't even put his name on it because he was sure people would think he bought it from someone else." With that, Western Adventure Productions was formed. After two or three pictures, Ron began to direct. Throughout the '40s and early '50s, twelve Lash LaRue westerns were made, among them *Mark of the Lash* (1948) and *King of the Bullwhip* (1951).

While on the road, the Ormonds met Bob Lippert of Screen Guild, who had sold plates in the theaters during the war. June recalled, "Bob Lippert said, 'Could you make a western for me?' So we made *Rimfire* [1949] and then *Outlaw Women* [1952]. Ron wrote the script and directed. I did the choreography and wrote one of the songs, 'Crazy Over You.' The picture was very successful, and Bob gave us ten percent—as producers, we thought that was pretty good."

continued on next page

Top photo: Group shot from *Mark of the Lash*, included are: Ron Ormond (top row, third from left), Howco's Joy Houck (to Lash's left), Fuzzy St. John (to Lash's right), Howco's Francis White (cross-legged, with tie) and Tom "Detour" Neal (left on couch). Center photo: June (with puma) joins husband Ron for another group shot. Bottom photo: Lash shakes hands with Cliff Taylor (June's father) as Fuzzy St. John watches.





Always, the General directs group from left
 looking from right, an American during the shooting
 of former President. That's what it's for the
 Al 'Lash' to the stage appearance. Below, some
 soldiers in the area of the war in 1945, when they



THE MUSICALS

The musicals started in 1949 with *Square Dance Jubilee*, starring rising country stars Cowboy Copas and Spade Cooley. The next Lippert production was *Hollywood Varieties* (1950), which was about vaudeville. According to June, "I wrote this little beginning about vaudeville dying, and Bob Lippert loved it. The picture cost him \$10,000. I got all the acts I knew from my years on the road—Brit Wood and Whirl, Twirl, and a Girl—Robert Alda was the host. We shot with three cameras in a downtown L.A. theater and I worked day and night on the picture, even slept on the set. The only problem was I hadn't come up with the ending yet. I had 20 minutes—the crew was going to quit at five, and we couldn't afford to keep them around. I made one of my choreography maps with the dots and said, 'Give me a few minutes. I'll put this on.' There were almost 100 people on the set, but I got them all where they had to go."

Lippert next showed the Ormonds a minstrel film that had done well for Universal. "Bob said, 'What do you think of this, dear?' 'Well, Mr. Lippert,' I said. 'It's very good, except I think I could make one even better than that.' Ron almost killed me after we left."

"So I went home and said, 'I'm going to make some tea.' We were sitting in the kitchen, and Ron said, 'Well, come on, give me this great idea that you have.' So



Ron Ormond (bottom right) rides the boom crane while setting up a shot for *Hollywood Varieties*.

I related to him what I had in mind for this minstrel show. 'Tell me that again, Ron said. 'Tell me that again.' Pretty soon it got down on paper and it became *Yessir, Mr. Bones* [aka *Minstrel Man*, 1951].

"We got Emmet Miller," continued June, "one of the big-time minstrel stars. I had seen them all and met them down

South. As a child I used to go to Atlantic City, to the Million Dollar Pier, and see the minstrel show. I said, 'We'll show the boat coming in with them dancing and singing, and we'll put my father up there as the boatmaster.' I could see it in my mind. It was so vivid. All the minstrels were terrific in the picture."



Ron Ormond takes time out to chat with one of the blackface minstrels while the crew sets up for the next shot on the set for *Hollywood Varieties*.

SUNSET AND STOOGES

The Ormonds also organized personal appearance tours. "Sunset Carson," June went on, "was a big western star. We met him through Spade Cooley. The women went crazy over him. When the show was over, we had to hide him. He was just gorgeous, you know. We got him on a contract and took him out—I didn't go on these shows because a woman could never handle Sunset Carson. Ron worked with him on the show. For 13 weeks, Sunset Carson never saw a sober day. He was drunk all the time, very hard to work with. But such business was never seen."

Later, in the '50s, June put the Three Stooges out on the road. "They were in-between pictures and weren't very popular. I guaranteed them so much money. Curly was dead at the time, so I put in Shemp. Moe was very intelligent. We took pictures of the Stooges with the audience and we made more money taking the pictures with the Stooges than the theater made on the picture at the box office. It was a real ball for them."

June regrets not taking only one star, Bela Lugosi, out on the road. "We would have made a fortune, June said shaking her head. "I wanted to, but he said he had a problem. He told us, 'I have to have medication.' I thought he meant high colonics or something like that. I said, 'We'll get it taken care of.' I thought to myself, 'I've taken care of the Three Stooges, I can certainly take care of Bela Lugosi. But he

said to Ron, 'You don't understand what I've got to have' and motioned to his arm as if with a needle. I said, 'Oh, we couldn't get you that!' So Bela said, 'Well, then I can't go. I've got someone here who takes care of me.' Then Ed Wood booked Bela



Poster art for Howco's *Mesa of Lost Women*.

into the Silver Slipper in Las Vegas, and he suffered an overdose. Bela was Tim's godfather, you know."

MAN OR BEAST

Having done westerns and musicals, the Ormonds turned to science fiction. "Howco had this unfinished picture called *Tarantula* [not to be confused with the 1955 Universal film of the same name] that they asked Ron to finish,"

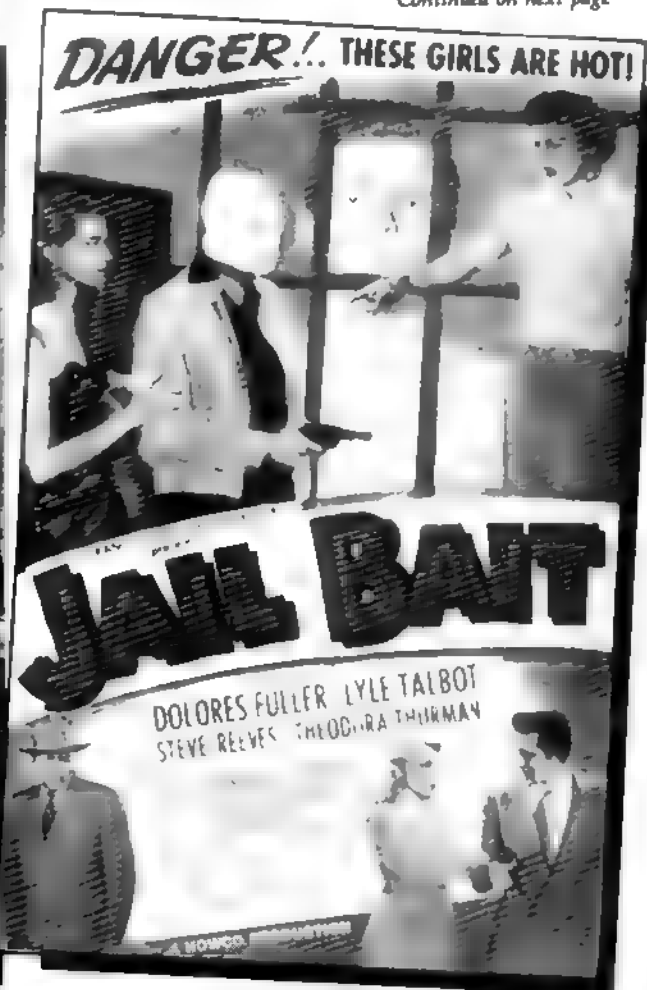
June said. "So we hired some girls, put wigs on them, and got Jackie Coogan to play a mad scientist."

The picture was called *Mesa of Lost Women* (1953), which made good money for Howco. Although June dismisses the picture today as "the lousiest thing I've ever seen," it has its moments. The prologue features a scantily clad Spanish Mesa girl with eight-inch fingernails. Ron's gravelly voice luridly asks, "Have you ever been kissed by a girl like this???" The soundtrack combines odd, dramatic riffs on the piano and a nervous Flamenco guitar. This disorienting, atonal music by Hoyt Curtin is repeated endlessly in Ormond movies, not to mention Ed Wood's *Jailbait*, which Ron also titled.

Little by little, the Ormonds edged toward the most lucrative market for independents, the exploitation film. "This English hand analyst had made a movie about how to read hands," said June. "He claimed that Hitler's right hand had a little star on it, which meant he was a murderer. A lot of it was very gruesome—there was even footage of a concentration camp with all the bodies piled up. We did a terrific campaign with a big, hairy, Hitler hand in the middle of it and called it *The Eternal Question*. We triple-billed it with *Attack of the Flying Saucers* and *Fire Maidens from Outer Space*. They made a lot of money."

However, nothing prepared the Ormonds for their first real success in the ex-

Continued on next page



Left, Bela Lugosi oversees the signing of Howco's contract for Ed Wood's production of *Jail Bait* (titled by Ormond, himself). Right, *Jail Bait* poster.

ploitation field, *Untamed Mistress* (1957).

"A Dr. Harris," June continued, "told us a story about a little boy in Africa left out in the jungle who was raised by gorillas. This was a true story so Ron bought the footage." The Ormonds had made *Black Panther* for Howco, a 30-minute short with Sabu, shot at the end of his career. As part of an agreement to leave Howco, they traded their 10 percent interest in *Outlaw Women* for *Black Panther's* film footage, minus Sabu. "So we took that and the footage from Dr. Harris and shot some new stuff using a girl raised by gorillas who was now grown—*Untamed Mistress*. We used sex appeal in the advertising. 'Which will be her mate, man or beast?' You see the gorilla standing over her."

"I went on the road with *Untamed Mistress*. I had a young man drive the car for me and Tim when he was out of school. I'd go into a town two days ahead of time giving fliers away and driving down the street in a convertible with a loud speaker and banners and stuff. I even had a mandressed up like a gorilla. Now that's what you call exploitation. I didn't particularly like it, but it was a way to make money. Back in Hollywood, Ron was plugging Lash LaRue pictures. We never got paid enough for the amount of work we put into that stuff. Top price at night was 75 cents. Matinees were 50 cents. Even with the Stooges, the top price was a dollar. I'd be a millionaire today if we had been getting four dollars admission like they do today."

But with only four prints of *Untamed Mistress* in three months in Texas, "I made \$99,000," June said. Howco distributed the film. "We'd go here and there, make all this big money, and I'd say, 'When are you going to remit to me?'" Howco then claimed it still owned the Sabu footage and filed a suit, which was later settled. Still, the Ormonds had had their first real taste of self-distribution.

STRANGERS IN PARADISES

The first major trauma came to the Ormonds when Ron got bladder cancer. After treatment, he headed off to the East with his friend Ormond McGill, the magician, for eight months. (Born Vic Narro, Ron took his mentor's Christian name for his surname.) June stayed behind to work road shows of *Untamed Mistress*. She also met a self-styled mystic named Mother Mary who claimed to have a contract with the Shasta, who are said to live deep in the ground to the ripe old age of 800 years. Mother Mary was also a flying saucer enthusiast, and it wasn't long before June got deeply involved with that, too. Alone with Tim and trying to make a living with *Untamed Mistress* while Ron was on a "spiritual journey," June was desperate for a "visitation" like she'd read about in Calvin Curvin's *The Night Has 1,000 Eyes*.

"When you heard Calvin's story," explained June, "you didn't believe it. I wanted proof. So Calvin Curvin said to me, 'Would you really like to have this experience?'" I said, 'Definitely.' He said, 'Go out on your patio tonight and look over in the

direction of Burbank, where the mountain is, and you will see three images coming forward. When they are almost near, get into your house quick and lie down."

"At about five minutes to twelve, I saw them through binoculars coming up over the mountains. I hurried into my room. Tim was already sleeping. I laid there quietly. When they passed overhead, my whole house smelled electrical. (If you ever go into an electrical plant, there's the same smell that comes from the electrode.) There was no smoke or anything, but when this smell enveloped me, I could feel myself leaving my body, not physically, but like astral projection. As I looked back, I could see myself lying there and Tim, too."

June found herself traveling through space and entering a "great mother ship" with the door coming down "like in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*." She travelled into a big auditorium with a shadowy figure she refers to as her "mentor, my guardian angel."

Inside the arena "were all these rooms," June described, "like schoolrooms, and in front was a computer. In each seat was a person sitting there—let's call them spirit entities because I was not there physically—and they had little caps on their heads with little antennae up there. I walked down this aisle, and when I got to the front, it was like a dais. This is tremendous," I said to myself. "But none of the people, these spirit entities, have any faces." My mentor said, "That's right. It's because they have no ego." With that, I snapped back and was in my bed.

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Untamed Mistress

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Excerpts from *The Untamed Mistress* promotional ad lot aimed for theater owners' most sensitive spot—their pocket book.

"About five minutes after I was back in bed, Calvin Gurvin called me. He said, 'June, did it happen?' I said, 'It sure did!'"

June, however, concluded that not all the saucer people were on the level. "You see, we're each born with an ego, which tells us good and evil, tells us what to do. We're born with the freedom to do this or to do that. So I [thought] that I shouldn't allow these flying saucer people to completely absorb me in my thinking because it was an ego kick with some of them."

"You see, not everybody is legit in this world. We made a film of Reinhold Schmidt's experience, though it wasn't much of a story. He gave us \$10,000, and we made it. I forget the name of it now—it was only 35 minutes long—but it played to packed houses at the flying saucer conventions. He's dead now. He was a con man if there ever was one. They put him in prison because he got money on false pretenses from quite a few women. He was a real charmer, to some people. But he couldn't charm me. It takes an awful lot to charm me."

June started raising money to produce Calvin Gurvin's story for Ron, who was now back from India. Gurvin liked the idea ("I want my part of it done absolutely correct," June quoted him), but Ron demurred. "I don't know if I actually and truly believe everybody 100 percent," June recalled Ron had said.

"I looked at Ron and said, 'Are you kidding? I'll have to give back all the money.' See, I had collected money from all the saucer people... five dollars here, ten dollars there... about \$18,000." Ron told her to give it all back.

"I had to write checks, send it all back. I was very disappointed that he wouldn't make the picture." But in India, Ron "had gone into many of the ashrams and had met many religious people. His whole attitude became metaphysical about the healing forces. I said to him, 'You've had such tremendous things happen to you—and I believe them because you have pictures and film to back you up—why don't you and McGill write a book?'"

The people who financed the book "were friends from the flying saucer movement," June related. Logically, she suggested, "Let's put together a picture—*Into the Strange Unknown*." The Ormonds never made the flying saucer film, but "*Into the Strange Unknown*, was a big hit all over the country, playing the lecture circuit with the flying saucer people...."

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

Be sure to be on hand next time when the fascinating filmmaking career of the Ormond family continues with more personal behind-the-scenes stories about other exploitation classics such as: *Please Don't Touch Me*, *The Stripper* and *The Monster*, *Girl from Tobacco Row*, *40 Acre Fued*, *White Lightnin' Road*, *The Burning Hell*, *The Second Coming* and *The Grim Reaper* to name but a few. See you then....

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BE HER MATE MAN OR
BEAST



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PREACHER'S DAUGHTER

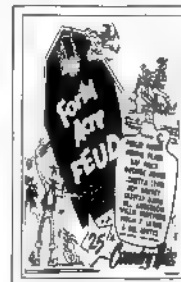
NONE WAS HER NAME
AND MESSIN' ROUND WAS
HER GAME



WHITE LIGHTNIN' ROAD

SOUPED UP CARS
BURNING BABES

RUBY WANTED A HAND UP
WEDDING SO HER PAPPY
SHE'S SHOTGUN



FORTY ACRE FUED

FIGHTIN' FEUDIN'
VINTAGE PERFORMANCES

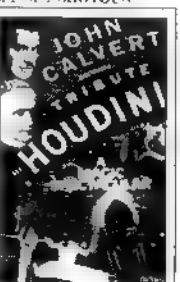
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ANDERSON AND MANY
OTHERS



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CYCLE CINEMA

*Bikers, babes, and bad road ahead turned
these low-budget B-movies into boffo box-office*



It all started in 1953. A different kind of outlaw came riding down the cinematic highway, as if resurrected from the dust of the Old West. But instead of a palomino, he rode a chrome-plated motorcycle and his buckskins had darkened into shiny black leather. A new film genre had been created, starring a free-wheeling counter-culture cowboy with miles of bad road waiting ahead.

In 1953 Marlon Brando drafted the social blueprint for a generation of rebel youth in Stanley Kramer's classic biker film, *The Wild One*. During the decades that followed, creative exploitation kept the genre's engines rev-

ving. In 1966, Roger Corman customized the cycle stereotype into a psycho sociopath in *The Wild Angels*. Two years later, exploitation expert Herschell Gordon Lewis sex-changed the macho biker image into hellcats on Harleys in his low-budget gender bender, *She-Devils on Wheels*. And in 1969 Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper recycled the traditional bad boy biker into Captain America, the hippie subculture anti-hero of *Easy Rider*.

During the 1970s, supernatural cyclists haunted the highways in *Werewolves on Wheels* and rose from the grave to raise hell in *The Death Wheelers*. By the 1980s, the

Continued on next page



biker genre had evolved into offbeat off-road fantasies like ex-Monkee-cum-filmmaker Michael Nesmith's *Timeriders* and auteur-of-the-dead George Romero's neo-medievalist *Knightriders*. The variations seemed endless. But one thing always remained the same. The biker film's anti-social manifesto.

Hollywood's initial fascination with outlaw bikers was sparked by an incident on July 4, 1947, when 4,000 members of a California motorcycle club allegedly went on a spree in the tiny town of Hollister. Drunken cyclists drove their machines through local restaurants and bars, busted glass, and generally terrorized the townsfolk. Two weeks later, *Life* magazine ran a story on the episode with a full-page photo of a somewhat unsavory cyclist posed comfortably on his machine, with a mound of empty beer bottles at his feet. "We like to show off," *Life* quoted the anonymous biker. "It's just a lot of fun."

Director Stanley Kramer was quick to recognize the story's cinematic potential. *The Wild One*, starring Marlon Brando, not only became the first true biker film, but also one of the first American films to address the problem of gang violence. "It would be nice if I could say that it was all an original idea of mine," Kramer told biographer Daniel Spoto, "and that I had understood and captured a tear in the



The infamous "biker photo" from *Life* magazine

fabric of society before other producers, and set out to make a film about it."

But the truth was that in 1951 Kramer had seen writer Frank Rooney's fictional account of the Hollister incident as a story, "The Cyclists' Raid," in *Harper's* magazine. "I thought it would make a good movie," Kramer admitted.

In 1953, Kramer, Brando and screenwriter John Paxton (the original writer, Ben Maddow, had been subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities Committee) spent three weeks hanging out

with motorcycle gang members. They recorded their interviews and used much of the bikers' slang in the final script. "These guys were a new breed...and there weren't many of them around," Kramer recalled.

"They all had girls and were living like nomads. All the talk about 'We gotta go, that's all. Just gotta move on...' was something we heard over and over. One of the film's most famous lines also came from my conversation with them. I asked one of the kids, 'What are you rebelling against?' and he answered, 'Whaddya got?'"

In *The Wild One*, Brando played Johnny, the leader of the Black Rebels, a motorcycle gang that disturbs the peace in a small town. Johnny meets Cathy, the sheriff's square-but-bored daughter, and he takes her for a ride on his bike. Meanwhile, the Black Rebels' carousing gets out of hand. Infuriated, the townspeople turn on Johnny and drive the gang out of town. Johnny returns and leaves Cathy with his stolen racing trophy as a memento.

Although the motorcycle gang in *The Wild One* seems tame by today's standards of violence—Brando and his pals don't even kill anyone—it alarmed censors at the time of its release and critics warned that the film would incite violence and anarchy. Columbia Pictures forced Kramer to include a message over the film's final shot, assuring the audience that all the hoodlums depicted in the film eventually were brought to justice (this version was shown in states where censorship laws required concrete punishment for crimes). The company also nixed Kramer's original release title: *Hot Blood*—which unfortunately necessitated the withdrawal of promotional ads with the word "Hot!" superimposed over Brando's forehead. The copy read: "Marlon Brando, Driven Too Far By His Own Hot Blood!"

Despite dire predictions, no rise in the incidence of motorcycle gangs terrorizing rural townsfolk was recorded after the film's release. Nor did Kramer's film inspire Hollywood to crank out more motorcycle dramas: only one or two more were made during the next 12 years.

But even more than bikers' hijinx in *The Wild One*, it was Brando's portrayal of Johnny—a new kind of surly, inarticulate, rebellious screen youth—that left a lasting impression on audiences everywhere. Brando's riding gear—leather jacket, tight black jeans, heavy racing boots, and slicked-back hair with long sideburns—soon became the dress code of rock 'n' rollers and hip kids everywhere.

Neither was the impact of Brando's character lost on the filmmakers and the actors associated with the numerous juvenile delinquent films that followed. When *Blackboard Jungle* came out in 1955, some critics accused young Vic Morrow of openly stealing from Brando's performance in *The Wild One*. They were probably right, but copying Brando wasn't such a bad idea in 1955—after all, *real* JD's were imitating *The Wild One* as well.

In the wave of low-budget JD movies that followed, biker gangs were used pri-



In this publicity shot from *The Wild One* Marlon Brando defines the "cool look" of the 1950s.

marily as a device to recycle old plots, as in American International Picture's *Motorcycle Gang* (1957), a remake of the previous year's *Dragstrip Girl*. This retread biker film simply substituted motorcycles for hot rods, but remains noteworthy for the rare screen appearance of an adult Carl Switzer, better known as "Alfalfa" from the *Our Gang* comedies. When villainous bikers *did* show up in AIP teen films such as *Dragstrip Riot* (1958), they were always vanquished by the "good" teens in the end.

By the early '60s, JD films were on the downgrade, while biker images were becoming as common to teen exploitation films as rock 'n' roll songs in an Elvis Presley movie. (In 1964 even the "King" sat atop a small motor scooter while singing "Wheels on My Heels" to Barbara Stanwyck in *Rowstabout*.) Actor John Ashley, a mainstay of AIP, both before and after the arrival of Frankie and Annette, also recalled the decline in popularity of the JD film, describing the new beach film era as, "a lot different from the old days at AIP. I can remember going to sneak previews of those pictures like *Motorcycle Gang* and *Dragstrip Girl*, and when the audience saw that damn AIP logo, they groaned. Of course, those pictures were made in ten days, sometimes less. But Bill Asher, who directed the beach pictures, wanted to maintain an image. We depicted the California surfing crowd as a bunch of fun-loving kids. Always cokes. No beers." (*The J.D. Films*, McGee/Robertson, p. 99) As Asher put it at the time, "Our audiences welcome clean sex. They are bored with juvenile delinquency."

So AIP cashed in on the biker phenomenon in a different way. Brando's *Wild One* characterization was comically spoofed by Harvey Lembeck as "Eric Von Zipper," leader of the Rats, a bungling motorcycle gang that served as comic foil to the wholesome surfers of AIP's *Beach Party* series. Lembeck appeared in every one of the beach movies—and not even being cut in half by a buzzsaw in *Bikini Beach* could prevent Von Zipper from returning one year later in *Beach Blanket Bingo*. The ill-fated Von Zipper cycled over his last sand dune in 1966, the same year that Roger Corman reinvented the chrome wheel for AIP, paving the way for the outlaw biker's Second Coming.

Having milked the box-office appeal of "clean sex" bone dry with bleached-out beach bombs like *The Ghost in the Invisible Bikini*, AIP commissioned Corman to deliver a different kind of film with new appeal for contemporary youth. Inspired (in much the same way as Kramer with *The Wild One*) by a photograph he had seen in *Life* magazine—this time of a Hell's Angels motorcycle gang's funeral—Corman hired screenwriter Charles Griffith to create a story about the Angels with a biker's funeral as its core. That idea eventually became *The Wild Angels* (1966).

The real Hell's Angels first attracted widespread notice in 1964, when several teenaged girls set off a public outcry by claiming to have been gang-raped by a



Brando and his gang, the Black Rebels, from *The Wild One*.

group of the bikers during the Oakland chapter's annual Labor Day run to Monterey. The press wasted little time in declaring the Angels a national menace, and by November 1965, the Angels made the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Gonzo guru Hunter Thompson wrote a book on the Angels, describing a typical Angel as "a human zoo on wheels. An outlaw...with his beard dyed green or bright red, his eyes hidden behind orange goggles, and a brass ring in his nose. Others wear capes and Apache headbands, or oversize sun-

glasses and peaked Prussian helmets. Earrings, Wehrmacht headgear and German Iron Crosses are virtually part of the uniform—like the grease-caked Levis, the sleeveless vests and all those fine tattoos... and the inevitable Hell's Angels insignia." With such strong visual imagery to work with, both Corman and Griffith knew that the exploitation potential for a film about the Angels was just too good to pass up.

The first "Angels" movies were done in a quasi-documentary style, almost as if the audience was watching expanded news coverage of the gang's exploits. This technique held certain advantages for the filmmakers. For one, as Corman soon realized, the a-few-days-in-the-life-of-a-motorcycle-gang format eliminated much of the traditional need for such things as expository plot, narrative structure—even dialogue (Griffith's original script for *The Wild Angels* contained less than 120 lines). Another advantage was that Corman could use the Hell's Angels themselves to shoot gang riding-and-fighting scenes, eliminating the need for extras and expensive stunt men.

Of course, Corman's demands for realism and his casting of authentic Angels also brought him a few problems. Police would show up every so often during the film's three-week shoot with warrants for certain Angels' arrests. Corman's original lead actor, George Chakiris, refused to comply with Corman's rule that all the actors had to do their own riding and was replaced with Peter Fonda, who insisted



Brando smiles for the camera in *The Wild One*.

Continued on next page



CYCLE CINEMA *continued*

on changing the gang leader's name from "Jack Black" to "Heavenly Blues" (supposedly, after one of Fonda's favorite recreational drugs, morning glory seeds). Eventually, the Angels decided they didn't like Corman anymore and took out their aggressions by beating up poor Peter Bogdanovich, then Corman's young production assistant. The Angels finally became so unhappy with Corman that they even filed a \$4 million lawsuit against AIP claiming that the film portrayed them in a "false and derogatory manner."

Despite the limited dialogue, Griffith made a gallant attempt to fashion a coherent storyline into the film's screenplay—which was then summarily ditched by Corman and Bogdanovich in favor of more shots of the Angels riding on their souped-up two-ton Harley-Davidson "hogs" and extra scenes of drunken orgies, mindless brawls and brutal gang rapes. After all, who needed the encumbrances of plot and exposition cutting down screen time for some good-old-boy biker raunch?

The Wild Angels, which depicted a few action-packed days of pointless violence and sex in the lives of an outlaw motorcycle gang, became the prototype for the entire sleaze-biker genre of the late '60s and early '70s. Besides Fonda as the gang leader, the cast included Bruce Dern, Nancy Sinatra, Michael J. Pollard and Diane Ladd. Loser (Bruce Dern) gets his chopper swiped by a rival Mexican biker gang, and the Angels head off to the desert to get it back. They find Loser's chopper, trash the thieves and start a brawl. The cops show up, Loser tries to steal one of their bikes and gets some lead pumped into him. The Angels abduct him from the hospital to keep him from going to prison (taking time out to rape the nurse on duty), but he croaks on them back at the hideout. The gang plans to have a funeral in Loser's hometown, but the minister begins to lecture the gang on their evil ways during the services, so they bind and gag the holy man and turn the funeral into a wild rum-pus. Loser's corpse is propped up in his casket to enjoy the festivities as his buddies gang-bang his old lady. When they've

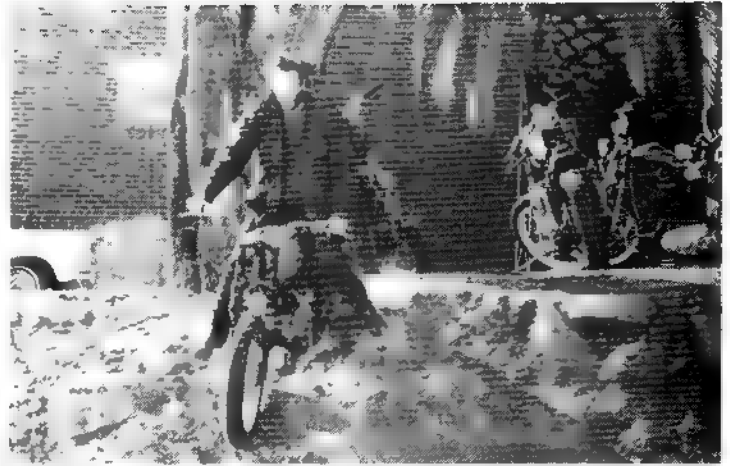
had their fun, Blues, Mike (Nancy Sinatra) and the other main characters carry Loser's casket while the other Angels follow in solemn procession on their choppers. A mob of angry citizens await them, and the climactic brawl ensues. The gang splits before the law arrives, all except for Blues, who has decided "there's nowhere to go," and stays to face the music.

Critical reaction to *The Wild Angels* was typified by *Newsweek*, which called it "an ugly piece of trash" that relied on "the shock value of murder, mob violence, gratuitous brutality and a squalid rape in a chapel during a funeral." Despite a storm of controversy similar to that which had surrounded *The Wild One*, the film became the official American entry in the prestigious 1966 Venice International Film Festival in. (It was later also shown at the Cannes festival.) *The Hollywood Reporter* probably offered the most relevant assessment of the picture, however, predicting that it would "make a lot of money." And *that's* the name of the exploitation game.

The *Reporter* was right. *The Wild Angels* became AIP's most profitable film to date.



Above, Peter Fonda and Nancy Sinatra (at left) pay their respects at a biker funeral in *The Wild Angels*. Opposite page, top left, Peter Fonda and Michael J. Pollard shoot pool in *The Wild Angels*. Bottom left, John Cassavetes in action in *Devil's Angels*. Right, a biker procession in *Devil's Angels*.



Opposite page, Peter Fonda (foreground, left) and friends in *The Wild Angels*. This page, Jack Nicholson (left) and Bruce Dern (right) in *Rebel Rousers*.

Audiences so enjoyed the wild biker outlaw excesses, AIP claimed, that they would sit through multiple performances on the same day. This news may have dismayed ministers and parents, but it sent a clear message to other B-movie entrepreneurs: Biker pictures were big box-office. No less than five cycle films were rushed into production and released the next year: *Rebel Rousers*, *Hell's Angels on Wheels*, *Devil's Angels*, *Wild Rebels* and *Born Losers*.

The success of pictures like *Hell's Angels on Wheels* (which grossed over \$2 million for Joe Solomon) indicated that, while 1967 may have been the year for "free love" and the "be-in," plenty of people were still willing to pay for raunchy sex and violence at the drive-in. Never a company to make a successful film just once, AIP rushed three more biker films into the theatres in 1967. Corman supervised the production of another Charles Griffith script, *Devil's Angels*. Although the ads proclaimed that "Violence is their God! and they hunt in a pack like rabid dogs!" director Daniel Haller actually presented a much tamer gang of bikers than the *Wild*

Angels. John Cassavetes played Cody, the fairly reasonable older gang leader of the Skulls, caught up in the conflict between his gang and the closed-minded townspeople who want to run them off. *Devil's Angels* contains far less brutality than *Wild Angels*, although the Skulls do manage to team up with another gang called the Stompers and destroy the small town of Brookville before it's all over.

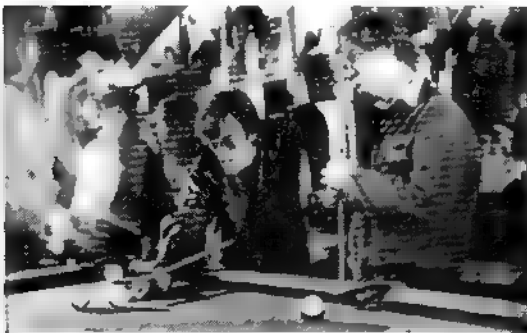
One man who saw the great commercial potential of sleazy biker epics was Joe Solomon, who got his start in 1967 producing AIP's *Hell's Angels on Wheels*. Solomon gambled all his assets and credit, and brought it in for around \$200,000. It grossed over \$2 million, which Solomon then put into two more biker films. He was then able to start his own Fanfare Pictures releasing firm.

Hell's Angels on Wheels saw the two-wheeled debut of Jack Nicholson and featured the camera work of Laszlo Kovacs, who would later lens *Easy Rider*. Director Richard Rush did Corman one better by recruiting 155 authentic Hell's Angels to perform the spectacular hog-riding sequence on the Golden Gate Bridge. Rush

even gave the Angels' head honcho Sonny Barger a "technical advisor" credit, which pleased the Maximum Leader so much that he offered to make personal appearances at screenings of the film. *Hell's Angels on Wheels* centered around the initiation into the gang of a gas station attendant named Poet (Nicholson), who is attracted to the gang's freewheeling lifestyle. Poet has himself a time raisin' hell with the Angels until he gets involved with Shill (Sabrina Scarf), girl of the gang's leader, Buddy (Adam Roarke). Buddy tries to run Poet down, but instead crashes his bike through a window and dies, his cycle bursting into flames.

Jack was soon back for more in Paragon's *The Rebel Rousers* (along with *Wild Angels* alumni Bruce Dern and Diane Ladd). Cameron Mitchell played an architect whose pregnant girlfriend is kidnapped by the Dern-led motorcycle gang. Luckily for Ladd, fate intervenes—Dern turns out to be an old high school pal of Mitchell's. The gang leader attempts to

Continued on next page





Above, Bikers invade a peaceful hippie commune in *Angels Unchained*. Opposite page, clockwise from top left, Dennis Hopper leads his gang in *The Glory Stompers*. Jody McCrea is surrounded in *The Glory Stompers*. A highway pass in *Chrome and Hot Leather*. Ready to ride in *Angels' Wild Women*.

CYCLE CINEMA *continued*

save Ladd from the Rousers, but Nicholson, who has won Ladd as a prize in a bike race, wants to claim the fruits of his victory. Suddenly, a family of pitchfork-brandishing Mexicans materializes to drive the bikers away and save the girl. The film was produced and directed by Martin B. Cohen, who later fondly recalled *Rebel Rousers* as "the worst thing I ever did."

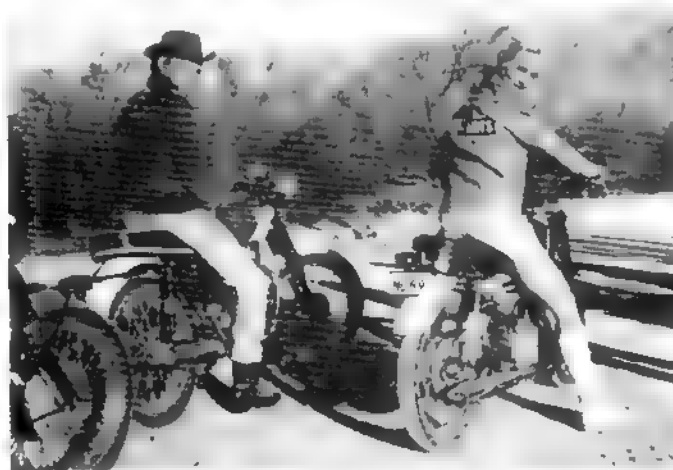
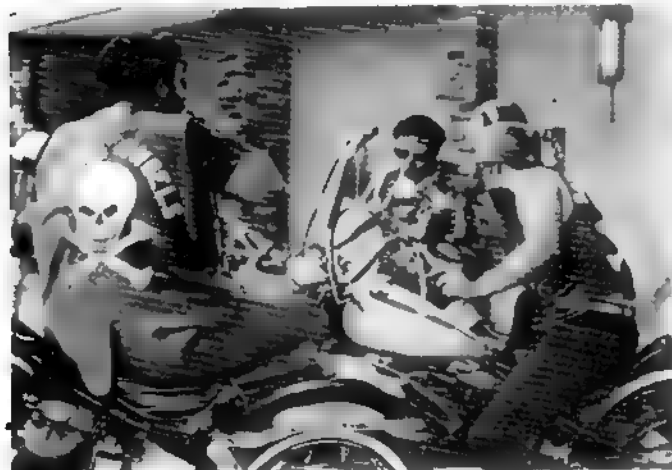
Tom Laughlin, directing under the pseudonym T.C. Frank, introduced his half-breed hero Billy Jack character in *Born Losers*, another 1967 entry from AIP. Billy and his friends take on a gang of bikers, led by Jeremy Slate, who terrorize Billy's hometown, then abduct and abuse his girlfriend (Elizabeth James). An added attraction was "special guest star" Jane Russell. (When Laughlin scored big in 1972 by reviving the character as the champion of

abused flower children in *Billy Jack*, AIP astutely cashed in by re-releasing *Born Losers* as "The Original Billy Jack." Laughlin sued for \$5 million in damages.)

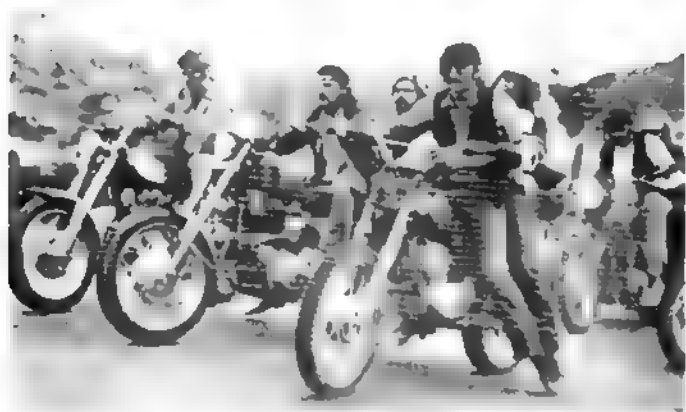
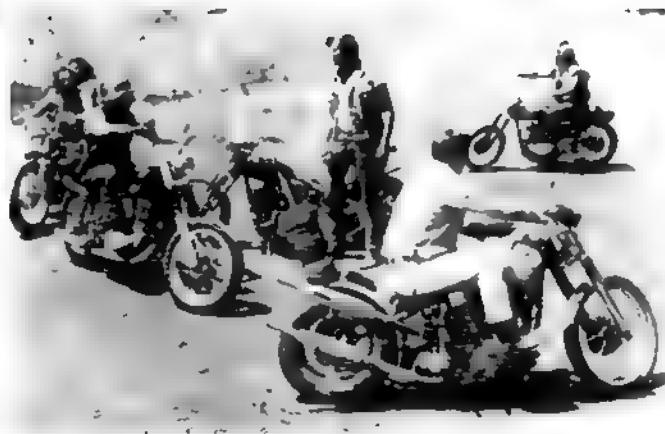
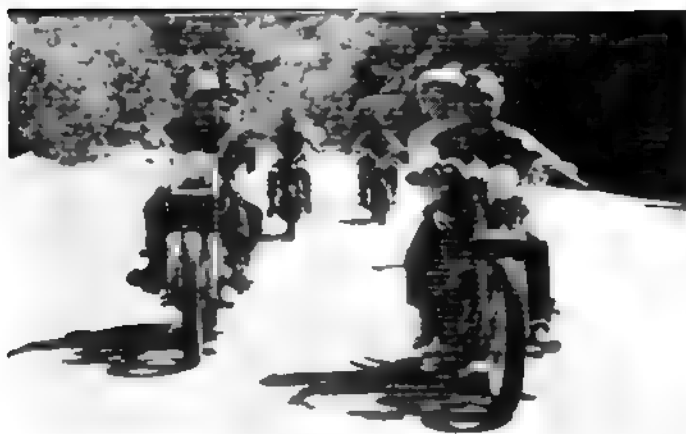
Wild Rebels (1967) starred Steve Alaine starred as a stock car driver who helps the police stop Satan's Angels, a four-member motorcycle gang. In 1968 Dennis Hopper made his sleazy biker debut in *The Glory Stompers* as a gang leader who beats up Jody McCrea, then kidnaps his girlfriend (Chris Noel), to sell her into white slavery for \$1000. McCrea goes after his girl with the help of good biker, Jock Mahoney.

1970 was another banner year for mindless brutality in biker films like *Cycle Savages*, *Hell's Bloody Devils*, *Angels Hard as They Come*, and one of the most depraved-yet-entertaining movies of all time, *Satan's Sadists*, starring Russ Tamblyn. (See this issue's Sam Sherman interview for further information on this film.)

Screenwriters weren't stupid. When rural cycle sleaze was needed in a story line, they simply turned to the conventions of the western genre. It was easy enough to take a script from an old western, change the banditos on horseback to hog-ridin' dropouts, substitute a motorcycle mama for the damsel in distress, throw in some "good bikers" to fight the outlaw gang—and "create" a biker movie. Screenwriter James Gordon White admitted stealing ideas for his biker scripts from old westerns: *Hell's Belles* (1969) was *Winchester '73* (1950) with Jeremy Slate on a cycle, replacing Jimmy Stewart on a steed. (Several western actors also made the transition from oaters to choppers. William Smith, star of *The Losers* and *Chrome and Hot Leather*, once played Texas Ranger Joe Riley on the Laredo television series. Jock Mahoney, who took on scumbag biker Dennis Hopper in *The Glory Stompers*, got his start in TV's *The Range*



Left, members of Satans Angels take a beer break in *The Wild Rebels*. Right, biker babes make a definitive fashion statement in *The Miniskirt Mob*.



Rider.) In general, though, most biker movies kept their plots incidental to the "important stuff," which is perhaps summed up best by a TV Movies review of *Satan's Sadists* (1970): "Renegade cyclists on the loose down the highway." Period.

There were, however, some variations on this theme. One popular twist was the female motorcycle gang. In *The Mini-Skirt Mob* (1968), Diane McBain put together a biker gang to terrorize her ex-boyfriend and his new wife. New World's *Bury Me an Angel* (1971) featured Dixie Peabody as a crazed biker gal hunting down the cyclist who killed her brother. But the nastiest girl bikerfilm has to be *She-Devils on Wheels*, produced and directed by H. G. Lewis (*Blood Feast*, *Two Thousand Maniacs*). The *She-Devils* were an assorted bevy of gals called The Maneaters, who liked to tie their lovers behind their cycles and drag them to slow, painful deaths.

Their theme song "Get Off the Road" proclaimed: "We are the Hellcats that nobody likes/Maneaters on motorbikes."

In the late '60s and early '70s, the Vietnam War was, for most, a touchy subject. But that didn't stop exploitation filmmakers from dabbling in the debris. The presence of the Vietnam War in chopper films went back to *The Wild Angels*, where in one scene a radio broadcasts war casualties in the background. Battle-hardened Viet vet Tom Stern returns from the war to build an outlaw biker army and take on the establishment police in *Angels from Hell* (1969). In *The Hard Ride* (1971), Phil (Robert Fuller) returns from 'Nam with the body of his war buddy Lenny, (whose last request was for a biker funeral); ironically, Phil gets shot and buried along with his friend after a battle breaks out between rival gangs. Tony Young rounds up his ex-Green Beret pals in *Chrome and Hot Lea-*

ther (1971) to decimate a motorcycle gang that murdered his girlfriend.

But being a biker doesn't mean that you aren't patriotic. The Hell's Angels reportedly offered their services to the government in the '70s to go over and straighten things out in Vietnam, which, apparently, inspired Joe Soloman to make *The Losers* (1972). In the film's opening sequence, five grungy bikers named Duke, Link, Speed, Limpy and Dirty Danny peel out from the back of an Army transport truck on armor-plated Yamahas and cruise the Cambodian jungle on a secret CIA mission to free a high-ranking U.S. official. Looking back, one wonders if this cinematic scenario wasn't such a bad idea.

Also popular in the early '70s was the idea of pitting bikers against drugged-out hippies. Pacifist communes face violent confrontations with bikers in *Angel Un-*

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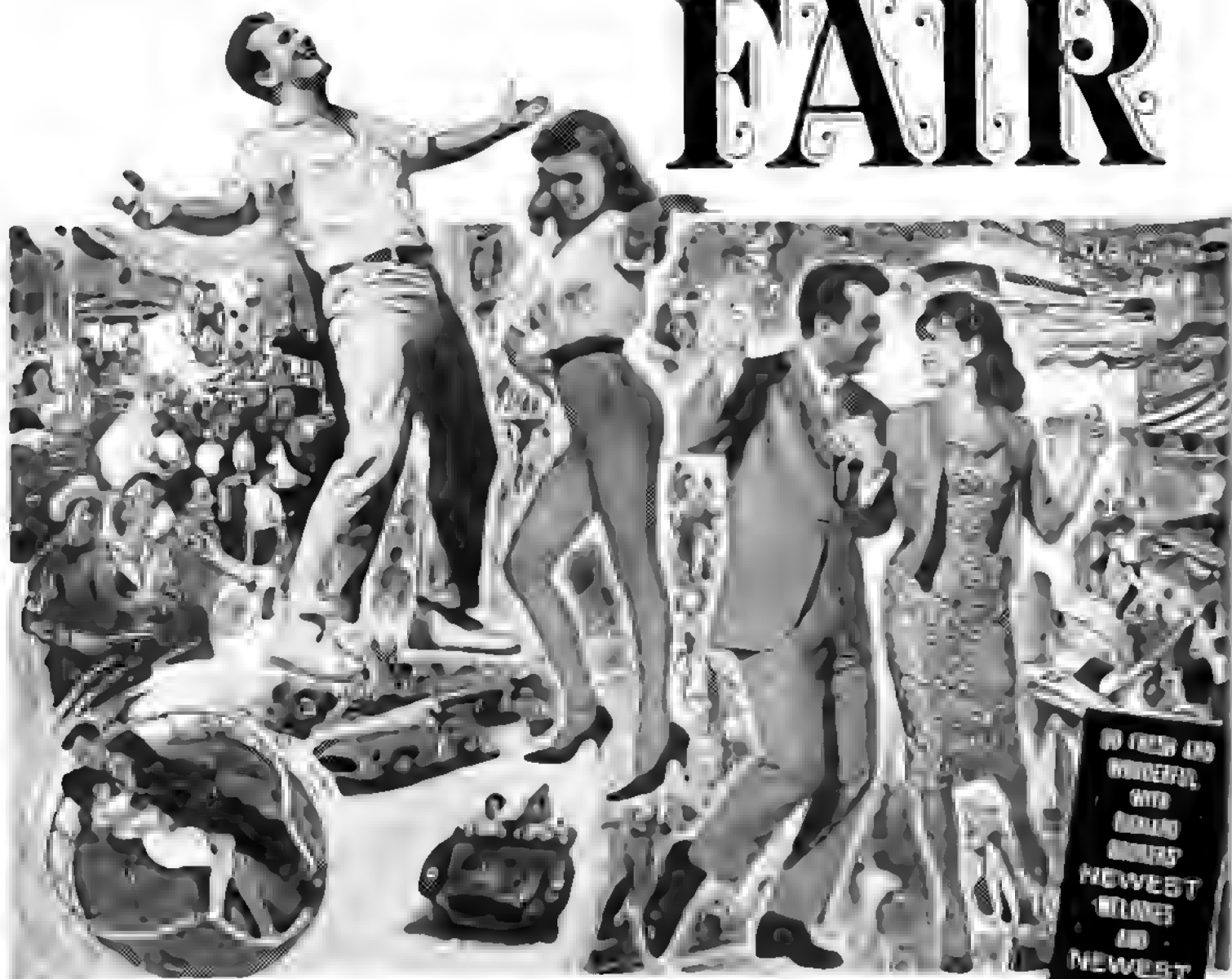


Left, bikers violate a community of American Indians in *The Savage Seven*. Right, a biker knife fight adds to the excitement in AIP's *Angels from Hell*.

THE ALL-AMERICAN MUSICAL
RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S NEW

*Some reflections on
middle-class exploitation:
the 1960's American
dream vs. the coming
cultural storm*

STATE FAIR



PAT BOBBY PAMELA ANN- TOM
BOONE DARIN TIFFIN MARGRET EWELL

CHARLES BRACKETT JOSE FERRER RICHARD GREEN

ALICE
FAYE

CINEMASCOPE
COLOR BY
DE LUXE

AND AL HAMMERSTEIN II SON OF LEO HANCOCK

ALFRED NEWMAN

Article by PAUL AMUNDSEN

Many of the original settings and locales for *State Fair*, the 1961 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical shot in Dallas, Texas, remain intact in 1991. The family ranch house is an abandoned shanty but the oak on which Bobby Darin leaned while romancing Pamela Tiffin still stands at the Fair lagoon. Even Blue-Boy the hog's performing arena can still be seen. But the mood and values of the America which inspired this homespun view of summer youth has changed considerably.

There also seemed to be several different facets of American youth expressed in the films of the early '60s. They were goin' on sufin' safaris and and snuggling around beach bonfires in *Gidget Goes Hawaiian* and *Where the Boys Are*. Elvis was the ultimate representative for slicked-back respectful rebellion in a number of pictures while crooner Pat Boone white bucked his way into the hearts of every mother looking for just such a boy for her teen princess. Delinquent youth gangs hell-bent on hate and destruction plagued our inner cities as in *West Side Story*. And independent film companies, in particular, had a field day with the counter culture chrome cowboys and hot rod hooligans.

So, who were America's children? Actually, all of the above. But lurking behind the squeaky-clean teens of *State Fair* and Rockwellian image of family life was the hint of a coming cultural storm. The times they were a changin'.



Pat Boone smiles for the camera after filling his plate during lunch break on location with *State Fair*.

Granted, *State Fair* was hardly a box-office blue-ribbon winner, and remains little more than a lighthearted pleasantry. But beyond all the cotton candy kids is something more. *State Fair* is a journey back to a cloudless, pre-Kennedy assassination Dallas representing the last hurrah of America, Mom, and apple pie. The odd thing is that, during the making of the film, the coming storm darkened even the make-believe midway and for one of the film's stars, it was a sobering experience.

"It was the last movie of American innocence," Pamela Tiffin commented. "*State Fair* was emblematic, and was the last movie of its kind. It was a metaphor, especially since it was shot in Dallas just before the Kennedy assassination. When it came out on TV recently I recalled that I hadn't seen *State Fair* since the premiere on Broadway. As I watched, it was as if I was observing a funeral. The values in the movie—the ethics, the morals, the atmosphere—[whispers] are gone. It's not *Miami Vice*. It just upset me greatly on a cultural plane. I thought that was the America that I knew. That's the reality that I lived as a young girl in the '40s and '50s, one that I deeply respect. But this is not my America anymore; America's another place. It may be more dynamic, but it makes me feel very old and an exile in my own country.

"When *State Fair* was shown in New York, it had a big premiere. Richard Rodgers was there. There was a big 'to-do,' but city people are not interested in country people—and that was especially true then. So the audience thought it was hokey, and corny, and boring. I remember one critic said it was a 'well-chewed chestnut' because it had been made so many times. No one even talked to me about the movie. Of course, outside of New York it was greatly appreciated.

"The people in my life had no point of reference to understand it, and most people remembered the [1945] Jeanne Crain version as being much slicker—and more Hollywood. They always said, this is the third remake, why redo it again? It has nothing to do with the Sixties in America; it was just something Hollywood cranked out because they didn't know what else to do. The film was not appreciated, but I wasn't a career actress and I wasn't worried about things like that. I was also doing another movie, so it didn't really matter."

The 1933, non-musical *State Fair* was

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Boone watches as Alice Faye opens her "lunch box," autographed by Gregory Peck to "Freddie."

based on the Philip Stong novel. Country teens find romance, and Mom and Dad win a bunch of blue ribbons. Starring Will Rogers and Janet Gaynor, it was a "heads up during the Depression" story. Rodgers and Hammerstein scored the 1945 remake and took an Oscar for "It Might as Well be Spring." Starring Dick Haymes (serious "crooner" threat to Bing Crosby), Vivian Blaine, Dana Andrews, Jeanne Crain, Charles Winninger, and Fay Bainter (Andy Hardy's mom), this *Fair* was, at best, fair.

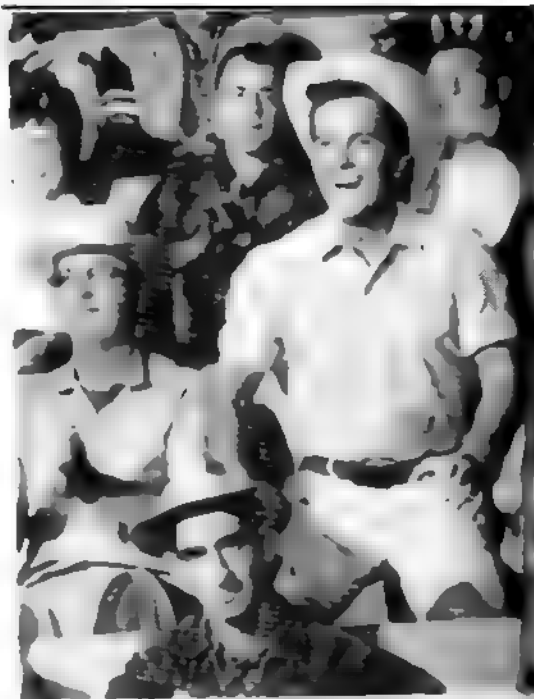
In contrast, the 1961 \$4.5 million remake, "The new *State Fair*," replaced Will Rogers' quaint carnival with a neon-lit Dallas and space-age midway. "This Frake family is a group of 1961 'hep' people who go to the movies, watch TV, and drive sports cars and motor scooters," explained director Jose Ferrer. "In spite of the fact that they live on a farm, they are not strictly bucolic." *Fair* marked the debut of Richard Rodgers as a motion picture lyricist; five new songs were written for the film.

In the early hours of the dawn on September 1, 1961, a train whistle could be heard in the far distance from peaceful Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas. It was signalling the arrival of the first *State Fair* actor in town. Chugging right past the plaza, across a triple overpass, past a grassy knoll with a stockade fence, the Santa Fe streamliner carried Pat Boone to Union Station. (Remember, trains were still on

accepted method of travel in 1961.) Sixteen-year-old Marilyn Peek of Gaston Junior High had been waiting since 4 a.m. "No one else can sing like Pat can," she sighed. Her dreamboat stood her up—sneaky Pat exited on a secret back ramp.

"I loved the Dallas area—it had really begun to feel like home to me," said Pat Boone, who starred as youthful Wayne Frake in *Fair*. The actor's career had inauspiciously gotten underway when, as a college kid, he applied for a Fort Worth paper route. One connection led to another, and before long, he was discovered by KDXL radio owner, Lee Segall. He was hosting local TV (*Foremost Teen Time*) and winning Ted Mack's and Arthur Godfrey's *Amateur Hours*.

"The support from Texas friends was overwhelming," said Boone. "They just flooded New York with cards. I appeared on Godfrey and won. As a result of those appearances, I got a recording contract. I made a record right away, moved to New York, began making movies, and had a television show. In almost a blinding flash, I was back there in Dallas making *State Fair* with all those past associations. It seemed like I had just been a starry-eyed young kid, knocking on doors and getting turned down, when suddenly I was back with a contract from 20th Century-Fox. I saw the humor and almost the pathos in the situation. Here I'd been getting by on \$44 a week, then suddenly I was being driven around in limousines."



The Frake family cheers as Dad (Tom Ewell) and Blue

"Pat seemed very comfortable playing Wayne," added Tiffin. "He was perfect for the role. Although, I sensed that he really would have liked to play more city boys and 'slicker' roles—just for a change! He didn't want to be the eternal 'son' or 'boy.'"

Pat's movie Mom was Alice Faye, sweetheart of the 1930's 20th Century-Fox musicals (*Alexander's Ragtime Band*). The



Above, Pamela Tiffin stands at the entrance to the Fair as Big Lee calls for every one to "have fun." Top right, Tom Ewell loads up on some of "Fred's Hickory Smoked Barbecue" specially catered for the cast and crew on location. Bottom right, Alice Faye appreciates Fred's cooking as well.





oy the hog bring home the bacon (a Blue Ribbon.)

star of *In Old Chicago* had retired to raise a family in 1945. Appointed "the world's finest vocalist" by George Gershwin and Irving Berlin, Faye appeared in *Fair* due to a contractual obligation. The striking blonde actress portrayed the mother, Melissa Frake—a far cry from the frowsy Bainter! Evoking a curious nostalgia in World War II era viewers, her comeback sparked

near-ecstasy. Arriving with husband/bandleader Phil Harris at Love Field, she was swamped by 25 news photographers who followed her to the Sheraton on Live Oak Street. (It was the official host to the *Fair* company, and, in 1961, was two blocks from Jack Ruby's notorious strip joint, The Carousel Club. The Sheraton, with its anachronistic, aqua/gray marble tile exterior, was sold in August, 1990. This writer observed construction crews dismantling the letters of the once-classiest place in the city. The telephone company now resides at the intersection of Field and Commerce, once locale of Ruby's Carousel.) Faye's suite was flooded with flowers from members of her old movie crews. The sensitive actress wept openly.

"I had wonderful friends in Dallas, the Bickers, so Dallas is very near and dear to me," said Faye, who now lives in Palm Springs. (Benny Bickers' University Club was Dallas' premier dinner club in '61. The press predicted, "With the *Fair* cast arriving, don't you know the U-Club will swing for the next couple of months?")

"I hadn't worked in many, many years—well, not many years, but quite a while!" laughed Faye. "The thing that was most enjoyable about working on the film was being around the people of Dallas—they're the friendliest in the world. And you just can't go wrong with the story. They could make *State Fair* for the next hundred years, I suppose. It's tried-and-true. Although, there were a lot of problems with the pic-

ture I was sorry about. I wasn't really happy with my performance. The greatest thing that came out of it was Ann-Margret; it was her debut in films, and she was wonderful. And in my mind, Bobby Darin was one of the greatest entertainers I've ever known."

Pop singer Darin ("Splish Splash"), who played Brylcroemed TV guy Jerry Dundee in *Fair*, arrived in Dallas by train due to a fear of flying. Darin had met new bride Sandra "Gidget/Tammy" Dee while shooting *Come September*, and had parlayed a recording of "Mack the Knife" into a million-dollar career. At Union Station, he was asked if he was tired of "Mack."

"That's like asking me if I'm tired of a million dollars," he laughed. "Man, I love that song." He also added, "I won't discuss Sandra. You've seen so much love in Hollywood. Well, speaking for myself, this boy-girl relationship will not be subjected to cynical beratings or sideline platitudes. Reporters are free to pick up any information, but not from me. Unquote."

Next in town was stunning brunette Pamela Tiffin, who played daughter Margie Frake in *Fair*. The former *Vogue* model, who'd just completed *Summer and Smoke* and Billy Wilder's *One-Two-Three*, was hailed by the press as "the biggest new star since Audrey Hepburn." Columnist Vernon Scott wrote, "If you're any kind of man, you have to look twice at Pamela Tiffin. Even if your wife is glaring daggers

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Top left, a pretty Pamela Tiffin shades her eyes from the sun on location during a lunch break. Bottom left, director Jose Ferrer chats with Pat Boone while eating. Above, a giant Hollywood stage light seems curiously out of place in this rural Texas setting as cast and crew turn out for lunch.

in fury, Pamela is worth it." He also added, "She had the males swivelling their heads as if the entire population were watching a tennis tournament."

"So much has happened to me this past year that, my goodness, I'll faint," said the Hunter College coed at the time. When someone asked Tiffin why she was the only Hollywood starlet who didn't publicize her measurements, the 19-year-old actress replied, "What possible difference can it make what the actual figures are? I mean, the real purpose of a girl is to make a man feel like a man, and I guess I can do that." (Billy Wilder once said, "She's such a thing of great beauty, I can't stand it.")

"After seeing *State Fair* recently, I thought that it was a very charming, very American movie," remarked Tiffin. And she would be the one to know. For ten

years, she's been recording secretary for the New York chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Tom Ewell, the amiable father (Abel Frake) in *Fair*, came next. He'd been Jayne Mansfield's bumbling agent in *The Girl Can't Help It* and received critical success on Broadway with *Waiting for Godot*. At Love Field, he donned his first cowboy hat. "Right now, I only rate 21 1/2 gallons," he quipped. Someone shouted, "How was it playing opposite Marilyn Monroe in *The Seven Year Itch*?" He deadpanned, "It ain't bad." Then someone shouted, "You look better on the screen." Ewell replied, "Don't we all."

"*State Fair* is a happy memory for me. I was particularly close to Pat, whom I love dearly," said Tom Ewell, now 82-years-old and living in California with his devoted wife, Marjorie. "I'm a country boy who grew up with fairs; it really was the



From the late '50s, a candid shot of "Kiddie Town," on



From top, the entrance to the Midway of the Texas State Fair. (Note the movie lights hanging from the archway at upper right.) Boone prepares to race his red sports car, which he has named "Emily."

big event in our lives. It's what we lived for. I think, for that reason, the film has universal appeal. It was the only film I ever sang in—and once was enough!"

Ewell recalled, "We ate with Dick Powell and June Allyson, who were in *Dallas* then. Powell was head of Four-Star Television. I'd been under contract to him for my series, *The Tom Ewell Show*, which had run on CBS [in 1960]. I thought it was rather good and was sorry it was cancelled."

As this stellar bunch was besieged by fans (there were armed guards outside Boone's hotel room), the unknown Ann-Margret, then 20, came to *Dallas*. Cast as Boone's snazzy "carnival" girlfriend Emily Porter in *Fair*, Margret spent the day alone roaming the midway unnoticed. How anyone could fail to notice the 5' 4", emerald-eyed beauty is a mystery in itself.

By 1961, RCA and Fox had the North-western grad (discovered, incidentally, by George Burns and Jack Benny) under contract—but with one hitch....

"This beautiful girl is at the threshold of a film career," stated Hedda Hopper, "but she poses a problem. How would you cast Ann-Margret? Sweet or naughty? A lead or bit? In the words of one studio executive, 'This kid was just too good to let out on the open market.' The studio is thinking of casting her in its third remake of *State Fair* with Pat Boone and Arthur Godfrey." (Ewell replaced Godfrey. Faye replaced, of all people, Shirley Booth—TV maid "Hazel"!)

"I have very, very fond memories of everybody and everything concerning *Fair*," said Ann-Margret, currently performing in Las Vegas. "There was such a warm feeling on the set. I loved the people of Texas. I'm crazy about them! After shooting ended, we went on a 13-city PR tour. We went everywhere, including Houston and Austin. People were so hospitable."

"It was my second movie. The first I was in was Frank Capra's *Pocketful of Miracles* as Bette Davis' daughter. I wasn't as famous as the others, but I wasn't nervous either. In fact, I had a wonderful time. I'd just bought my parents a house and dropped the 'Olsson' from my name. Ann-



of the Texas State Fair's numerous family attractions.

Margret is actually my first name. I did that because I didn't want my parents to be hurt in any way by bad publicity or anything once I started in show business."

And there was lots of publicity for *State Fair*. Luring 2000 Dallasites to the first scene, filming began at three in the morning at the Livestock Pavilion. (The pavilion currently was in use during daylight hours on account of the upcoming fair.) It was packed with hundreds of hogs, including leading pig, Blue-Boy. This was the unique setting in which legendary Faye found herself attempting her first scene in 16 years. She was reportedly so nervous her knees were knocking. Summoning her courage, she gazed at the grinning porkers around her. "Just me and 99 other hams," the warm actress laughed.

"I thought I'd be nervous around those stars," added local extra Parks Tucker, "but I met all those folks and felt right at home. Alice Faye talked to me for half an hour about hogs."

Ewell didn't want to "hog" the spotlight, so he warbled the pre-recorded "More than Just a Friend" to Blue-Boy. The more romantically he sang it, the bigger laughs he got from the crowd. "He kept biting!" exclaimed Ewell. "They tried sticking something in him to keep him quiet. He probably didn't like my voice. To say I'm no singer is an understatement—I only sing to make people laugh. I never sang in a film again, though I did serenade the song to a pig in 1965 while campaigning for Wendell Forbes."

"Tom and I had such interesting conversations," remembered Tiffin. "He had just done *Waiting for Godot*. It is an amazing thing. Beckett is one of the Twentieth Century's most valuable playwrights. Discussion on such a serious cultural level made us laugh. It was so incongruous when this incredibly sophisticated and intelligent gentleman was singing to a pig. It went on and on, too, because the pig wasn't cooperating. Only a very remarkable man could do that and enjoy it. He did it well and was not humiliated. A lot of people would have been mortified."

Humiliation was the name of the game

next evening when Vice President Lyndon Johnson played his "nobody" role again (in 1961 Johnson's political profile was negligible), escorting a Pakistani camel driver on a tour of the fairgrounds! Mere yards from LBJ, Darin and Tiffin were shooting a cool '50s love song. "This Isn't Heaven," at the lagoon that was surrounded by atmospheric "moonlights" glowing in the trees. Here, Tiffin strolled a charming bridge, illumined by magical, *Jetsons* space-age arc lights. (The bridge and Kennedy-era lights would be laid waste in '63, when electrical circuits exploded.)

As hairstylist Gladys Witten re-sprayed Tiffin's plastic coiffure due to heavy winds, Darin winced at the song's snail-like tempo. "No finger-snapping!" he cried. The actor perked up, however, when a production "fowl"-up took place. Every time they played back "Heaven," the ducks in the lake quacked along. "They were really

with me, man!" Darin exclaimed excitedly. (Now, what if he'd sung "Splish Splash"?...) The word around town was that he was the next James Cagney. He'd done well in his first film.

"When I first met him," recalled Tiffin, "I thought Bobby Darin was one person I did not understand at all. I had no real frame of reference to understand him. For example, the people I grew up with in the Midwest said what they meant. You were not admired for being 'clever.' Also, I was a very sheltered only child, while he was kind of a 'smart-alecky' city kid. He even frightened me a little bit! It was not 'fear' really, but a tough guy was something I hadn't encountered. I remember he said once, 'You don't like me, do you? You think I'm a creep.' I felt so bad because Sandra was there."

Prizes were abundant at the Creative

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From top, Pat Boone joins Paul Whiteman on a Dallas TV show, "Foremost Teen Time," in 1956. A candid shot of kids in front of the Fair's "Flyingplane" ride, part of the Holsum Sunbeam Bread Party

Arts Building, which featured Melissa (Faye) entering the mincemeat competition. (Her mincemeat had been specially "spiked" by mischievous Ewell in the film.) Sloshed judge Wally Cox held out a first place blue ribbon—not to Mrs. Melissa Frake of Banning, Texas, but rather to Mrs. Melissa Frann of Baking. (No one even batted an eye, and Faye just gleefully accepted the award.) Propmaster Duke Abrahams was a stickler for detail; he even copied entry labels used by the real fair's Womens Department. Actual department premium books and entry forms were used. And when he learned the judges relied on lemons to clear their palates after every sample, out went his intended "atomizers."

The audience was in the next scene. Five thousand Dallasites packed bleacher

seats to appear in the background, bribed by a free Boone concert and birthday cake for Ferrer—oh, and also hourly \$100 cash giveaways.

"Isn't it Kinda Fun' was the big dance number that I did," remembered Ann-Margret. "It was shot at the bandshell (then called Theater Under the Stars). Nick Castle choreographed it, and he was superb. It took us three weeks to rehearse. I lost seven pounds doing that song." (However, Ann *did* rouse the energy to go out with Dallas Cowboy linebacker Bill Howton after filming. She'd met the gridiron star the day before, when the *Fair* cast had their own private box for a Cowboys-Steelers game.)

Production departments in '61 evidently didn't have to contend with much red tape. When Ferrer wanted to get a Dallas skyline shot, Texas State Fair President and Dallas Mayor, R. L. Thornton, order-



From top, Emily (Ann Margret) in one of the Fair's shows on the main stage. Mom Frake pulls Dad away from the girle show during their night at the Fair.

ed Dallas Power and Light to turn on every light in the downtown skyscrapers. They obeyed. In the movie, Dealey Plaza can be seen in the far distance.

Thornton was the epitome of the early '60s Dallas "mover-and-shaker." He lobbied valiantly to re-create the popular space needle, then the hit of the '62 Seattle World's Fair, at the Texas State Fair. "It's like a little boy climbing the tallest tree," he exclaimed. "It's like climbing Mount Everest." Dubbed "Mr. Dallas," Thornton symbolized the aggressive, on-the-move city that called herself "Big D." But on November 22, 1963, he was so thoroughly shaken by the Kennedy assassination that he instantly resigned his post as Fair President. "Mr. Dallas" died two months later.

Also visible in the shot are the WFAA-TV towers, site of Channel 8, two blocks south of Dealey Plaza. It was here on November 22, 1963 that assassination witnesses Bill and Gayle Newman would be hurried, on foot, to present to the world—and to an obviously aghast local anchorman—the first TV account of the presidential assassination.

The colorful midway carousel was all alight that night, too. "The Little Things in Texas" was such a cute song," said Faye. "Tom and I sang with the kids on the merry-go-round. They had huge arc lights rigged up on it. I must say, I have no idea how the cables kept from getting tangled." While Faye took time out to chat with happy fans, Ewell played with the (Lakewood Elementary) kids. That night, Faye told reporters her return to movies was anything but playtime.

"It was the right time for a comeback," she said. "Phil's quite a hunter now—he's in and out a lot. My oldest daughter is married. The young one is at the University of Arizona. So there I was all alone for spells. Then producer Charlie Brackett kept calling. He was so persistent; he called three or four times a day. I liked the script, told Phil about it, and he said I was crazy not to take it. So I said 'yes,' and woke up the next morning screaming, 'What have I done?' When I worked here long ago,



movies were simple and clean. They were something you could take your children to see. Today, it's a terrible chore for a mother to find a picture that's OK for kids. Even if the picture's alright, you have to worry about coming attractions."

Fascinating Dallas history can be seen casually walking around in the background of this scene. With calliope music in the air (not loud rock) the midway after dark was a gleeful haven for boys and girls. In best bib and tucker, teens wore ties. Unlit parking lots were no big deal to fair visitors. Fairgoers carted around corny dogs, Nutty-bars, plaster of paris, and fluorescent bulldogs, *not* stuffed California Raisins you could pick up at any chain toy store. Mother Goose's cheap Kiddie Town, seen fleetingly in the background, would be "re-zoned" in 1965. Two crude Magic Kingdom rip-offs edge their way into the frame: the Monorail, powered by Packard auto engines and christened "Transportation of the Future" (it would be demolished in '64); and a cut-rate Mad Teacup Ride. Best of all was the trashy Ride 'N' Laff spookhouse with its window display featuring an old hag stirring a cauldron. Overhead, a scratchy record emitted pathetic schtick of someone being tortured. Bert's Cafeteria, with its little neon sign peeking from behind the midway arch in the film, would be condemned in '68 after offering up a delicious entree of food poisoning to some 200 diners in one afternoon.

But, it wasn't corny dogs and Nutty-bars for dinner at H. L. Hunt's mansion, where Faye and Boone enjoyed deluxe cuisine with the world-famous Texas oil tycoon. "We became very good friends," said Boone. "When I got up to leave, he gave me an antique coffee grinder—which I still have. In return, I gave him a pair of my trademark white buck shoes. What in the world do you give a billionaire? But the next time I saw H. L., he wore them proudly." (Henceforth, Hunt would eat sack lunches with Boone outside the actor's trailer on a daily basis.)

Midway night filming commenced with Wayne (Boone) defending Emily (Mar-

gret) in a fistfight. Two thousand Texas Employment Commission extras and numerous unpaid, starstruck Dallasites, tripping regularly over four miles of cables, filled the lit-up midway. Since the real fair would not officially open for a month, the lagoon was drained, flowers were replanted, and game booths were set up. (In the nearby Cotton Bowl, Dwayne "Dobie Gillis" Hickman headlined "Miss Teen Night USA" with Bobby Rydell, Bobby Vee, and the late Roy Orbison.)

Suddenly, the midway went black—the light generators had blown. The crew



At the State Fair premiere, Pamela Tiffin and Ann-Margret look admiringly at a real "Big Tex."

Facing page, top: Ann-Margret's costume check for her role as carny girl Emily Parker. This page: Pamela Tiffin poses in front of Big Tex's boots.

frantically transferred equipment to the Wilkins Ranch in Kaufman, 60 miles away, where the ranch house scenes would be shot next morning. "This happened all the time," sighed Faye. "It was a very tough job for me. All I could do was fall in bed and get up. We had to get up at 12 midnight to go to makeup. Then we had to leave the hotel at three or four o'clock in the morning. Any picture shot on location is very hard work and not much fun."

Metaphorically speaking, the family ranch house does resemble a 1961 Southfork, sans J. R.'s intrigues. Ferrer gave the property a Hollywood face-lift with Styrofoam spray-painted apples on the trees, plastic flowers and real rose bushes, then built a fake-front silo, a windmill, and a doorway leading to a fake porch. The fabricated dock over the lake was where Tiffin would sing "It Might As Well Be Spring" (actually dubbed by Anita Gordon).

Investigation unearthed the Frake house in 1990, which reportedly has been a haunt for vandals and drug users. It looks like it's crying, with its heavily bashed-in windows, peeling paint, and collapsing porch engulfed in weeds. Ironically, Ferrer's rose bushes are in glorious bloom today. Ewell's barn still stands, once bright white, now gloomy gray with age. Tiffin's lake is mired in weeds and her "dock," after a thorough search, was discovered on the lake's murky floor. A startling discovery was that the interiors had been filmed inside the house.

Continued on next page

as opposed to on a soundstage. Today, one feels that a crack addict might plunge out of the pantry as one roams the kitchen where Alice Faye once merrily mixed cookie dough.

"My folks owned that house," stated George Becker. "Alice Faye was always chatting with the farmer's wives and making coffee and refreshments with them. Boone and Darin caught innings of the World Series with the farmers, instead of hiding in their trailers. Later, the president of 20th Century-Fox invited Mom and Dad to Hollywood and proceeded to give them a special studio tour. You won't see that today."

"It Might As Well Be Spring" was one of the first scenes we filmed," said Tiffin. "I had just gotten back from Europe doing *One-Two-Three*, playing a spoiled, rich heiress. All of a sudden, I had to play this simple country girl. I kept thinking, how can they give me the song that belonged to Jeanne Crain and Janet Gaynor? But after one take, Jose said, 'That's perfect.' He told me: 'I don't want you doing a Broadway song. This is Margie's awakening. She's beginning to see that the world is really much larger than just the farm she knows. There's a little bit of fear, fear of having to be grown up, regret at leaving girlhood behind. She's in the middle of a river. You don't smile, and don't be cute or cheerful.'"

What *did* bring smiles was a Texas barbecue lunch break. This writer's father owned a Dallas family restaurant chain in 1961, Fred's Barbecue, which catered to the *Fair* company. As the stars of movie-land loaded their plates, they didn't mind taking a moment to grin to that nice man over there taking pictures (Dad). Believe it or not, that barbecue's still in their memory banks. "I remember that very much," stated Ewell. "I remember it because it was one of the highlights of the trip. The food was excellent, especially the ribs."

"We thought it was a big treat," said Tiffin. "Everyone thinks actors are always wining and dining at the fanciest restaurants. The fact is, you have to fight for your fried eggs in the morning, and at noon you get those little boxes of cold, miserable food. That day, we kept going back for more. One of my first spare ribs was one of those Fred's Barbecue things."

(Fred's closed its doors in 1990, after fifty years in Dallas. Founder Fred Bell later began the national Big Boy hamburger restaurant chain. This writer's father had bought Fred's from Bell in 1959.)

Popular with families, Fred's possessed its share of unique Dallas history. The *Fair* cast dined at the Oak Cliff Wynnewood location. This was located one block south of Beckley Avenue, then site of Lee Harvey Oswald's boarding house (which was, in turn, two blocks from Jack Ruby's apartment) Oswald dined at Fred's once a week, usually in late afternoon.

"He came in every Monday," recounted Fred's manager of fifty years, Guy

Money. "He was real quiet—a real spindly little guy. Never said nothin'. He just got the same thing every time—a root beer and a sandwich. I would actually say he was sort of a friendly fella."

Bill Alexander, Dallas District Attorney who trailed Oswald to his arrest at the Oak Cliff "Texas" Theater (six blocks from Fred's), was a fanatical Fred's regular until its closing day in 1990. He is still personal friends with Money. Also worthy of note: six blocks west from the Oak Cliff Fred's was major competitor Austin's Barbecue on Illinois Avenue. It was here in 1961 that owner Austin Cook hired a brand-new night security guard—Dallas police officer, J. D. Tippitt. Austin's is still on Illinois Ave.



Pamela Tiffin in front of the Fair's hero, Big Tex.

That afternoon, Darin greeted his wife at the airport with a lively banjo serenade. The couple was immediately besieged by fans. (After all, "Tammy Tell Me True" was then the Palace's #1 hit. At the Palace, teen Sandra Smith exploded into tears of rapture as she was crowned "Miss Tammy of Dallas.") The deft Darins escaped the fans by sharing candlelit dinners at a Hungarian hole-in-the-wall on McKinney Avenue.

Telephone directories from 1961 assisted in the discovery of the exact location of the (now long-since vanished) Hungarian cafe which the Darins found so enchanting. Diplomatic propriety and taste would suggest nondisclosure of the name of the organization which has usurped the magical little bistro where the '50s icons shared moonlight munchies. But for those undaunted individuals who wish to track down the historical spot, here's a tip: go southwest on McKinney, just past Cedar Springs, and look for the Golden Arches...

Later that night at the fair esplanade, Darin and Tiffin shot another "lovers'-lane" scene. Bobby, gentle suitor that he was, courted his date with the compassionate suggestion, "Let's you and me

grab some bottles, get wet, cut up a coupla' steaks, have a few laughs, and Big Daddy'll tell ya about life outside Dallas."

"I had to kiss Bobby," said Tiffin. "Jose told me, 'If he makes you uncomfortable, use that. She should be uncomfortable in the scene.' I think I ended up telling Bobby, 'I'm sorry. I'm embarrassed.' I hadn't even been married at that point. Sandra also was watching, but when she noticed my apprehension, she said: 'Oh, don't worry. I don't mind. It's part of his work.'" (Times Herald columnist Tony Zoppi can be seen in this scene as a masher whom Tiffin mistakes for Darin. Two years later, Zoppi became Ann-Margret's agent.)

Out of the blue, Bobby scuffled with a crown of autograph-seekers. According to Darin, Dee was "pawed" by the fans. He took a swing, but later apologized to reporters for the incident. He said, "I didn't know what they were trying to do. I'm tense about Sandy's condition. You know, it could be any day." His face suddenly broke into a big grin. "Wouldn't that be something if we went home with a Texan?"

The newsmen further asked if Darin had serious goals. "I would like to be a legend by 25, an institution by 30, and..." Darin added, "I am my own idol."

Then they inquired if he considered Boone a threat. "We are good friends," Darin insisted. "You can't put our working together on a competitive level. It's a wide-open field. Pat's a standard in the business, something I aspire to be. Oddly enough, we don't have a single scene together, but I hope to make up for that in our personal roles after work."

"Bobby was his own guy at the time, very opinionated," admitted Boone. "He was absorbed in his career then. I guess he pretty much stayed that way. I had him over for dinner several times. I even shared my Christian faith with him—and I'm glad. It's hard to say whether it had an impact or not; we never had any serious discussions after that. By the way, I noticed that Ann-Margret had a family Bible she carried on the set. She and I had serious discussions."

Later, Faye's singing of "Never Say No To a Man" accurately captured the mood of trust so prevalent in the now-bygone era. One prime example in the movie is when Tiffin strolls, fashion model-style, through the downtown trailer park at one a.m.—and nobody notices. Another is Ewell's casual napping outside the trailer at the same early hour. Finally, when Tiffin tiptoes up to the unlocked trailer door, Mama Faye's asleep inside with two open windows above her!

"We shot 'Never Say No' in two hours because Alice was such a professional," recalled Tiffin. "I'm glad, because we were about to suffocate in that trailer. Alice was so easy to work with, it wasn't work at all. That song was so warm and witty. The whole thing was typical of the tone of the movie. Her character seemed to be steady, not frustrated or angry. She just made her pies, liked her husband, liked her life—all

Continued on page 94



20th Century-Fox's production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "State Fair" arriving at the ... Theater. Pat Boone, Ann-Margret, Tom Ewell and Alice Faye are in the fun, romance and excitement of this new CinemaScope DeLuxe Color musical. Mar 24

Innocent Miss to Saucy Siren



Ann-Margret undergoes a change of costume and character as she reveals the two sides of every woman in "Isn't It Kinda Fun," one cinematic "State Fair." The 20th Century-Fox CinemaScope DeLuxe Color production co-stars Pat Boone, Bobby Darin, Pamela Tiffin, Tom Ewell and Alice Faye and arrives ... at the ... Theater. Mar 20



Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinemusical Modern And Tune-filled 'State Fair' Sparkling Fun

(Newspaper Advance)

Pat Boone Sings, Dances, Races, At the 'State Fair'

Darin, Pamela Tiffin, Ann-Margret

Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II in 20th Century-Fox's CinemaScope DeLuxe Color extravaganza, "State Fair." The musical romance opens at the ... Theater.

ented artist "State Fair" marks the first time Boone plays past auto racing, acrobatic, musical number, "That's For Me," sings Rodgers and Hammerstein songs on the screen and had a song, especially for him by Richard

A though Boone does not indulge in drinking, he performs a drunk scene in the film. "Pat

"that he moved me terrifically, nearly broke me up. I found myself forgetting I wasn't audi-

rarely happens to me."

Richard Rodgers Pops New Songs For 'State Fair'

creation with the late Oscar Hammerstein II resulted in so many

Century-Fox's "State Fair," opening at the ... Theater.

are in addition to the songs that the famed team wrote together for this treasure chest of American

The five songs written expressly for the screen include

Things in Texas," "Wining and Margaret duet, "More Than Just

No (To A Man)," Alice Faye's

The hitting tunes previously merger for "State Fair" are

Me" (Pat Boone), "Falling In

"It's A Grand Night For Singing" (Alice Faye) and the big production number choreographed

Pamela Tiffin 'Blazing Star'

While filming Rodgers and Hammerstein's "State Fair" on location at her home town of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, brought

Princess Blazing Star, an 11-year-old girl, came to the set

Pat Boone, Bobby Darin, Ann-Margret, Tom Ewell and Alice Faye in the CinemaScope DeLuxe

comedy, opening at the ... Theater.

Like a fascinating and beautiful canvas of American life filled with memorable songs and dances, Rodgers and Hammerstein's "State Fair" will entertain and delight people of all ages when it opens ... at the ... Theater. This 20th Century-Fox CinemaScope DeLuxe Color extravaganza includes such outstanding and fresh talents as Pat Boone, Bobby Darin, Pamela Tiffin, Ann-Margret, Tom Ewell and marks the return of the wonderful Alice Faye to the motion picture screen.



Lovely Ann-Margret provides the necessary stimulation and inspiration in Rodgers and Hammerstein's cinematic "State Fair." The 20th Century-Fox CinemaScope DeLuxe Color production, co-starring Bobby Darin, Pamela Tiffin, Tom Ewell and Alice Faye in her screen return, opens ... at the ... Theater. Mar 20

Ann-Margret On Way To Stardom

ers out Hammerstein's "State

Bobby Darin, Pamela Tiffin, Tom

ganza which arrives at the ... Theater.

recording star dancer and a film

tion and talent. Darin, "The American" by her

emerges from a serene soft spoken girl into a rhythmically

and a short black chiffon skirt and black garters for the

kinetic "Fair." Of her dancing fanfare choreographer Nick

or I've ever worked with and

ing and crew were Jack Ruby to put her on his TV show. The

contract and a multi picture at

try Fox. "State Fair" in CinemaScope

Century Fox film. The picture

and was shown in heart of a

Oklahoma City Fair Race Track

Bobby Darin Keeps 'Fair' Pace Hot

Bobby Darin, who has been referred to as "the most striking instance of the rebirth of showmanship," receives the most important role in his meteoric screen career in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "State Fair."

starring Pat Boone, Pamela Tiffin, Ann-Margret, Tom Ewell and Alice Faye, arrives at the ... Theater.

The Rock 'n' Roll vocalist who made "Mark The Knife" one of the most popular songs in history, plays a local TV announcer

affair.

Darin and Pat Boone, rather rivals, conceived a close friend-

"You can't put out working to

ard in the business some thing I aspire to be."

This isn't the first time of the new Richard Rodgers songs, was

"State Fair" will be

Faye Joins 'Fair': Returns to Screen

The Queen of the 20th Century Fox musicals, Alice Faye, has been lured back to the

"Merissa" in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "State Fair" appearing with Miss Faye in the

radio comedy, starring in the ... Theater are Pat Boone

Ann-Margret and Tom Ewell

casts the singing chemistry of al-

The story of a middle class the great "State Fair" has been

Breath with plenty of fun, romance sparkling dialogue excit-

h's singing, acting and writing portrays "Wayne Drake," a farm

ing and a pretty girl whose singing sensation Bobby Darin continues to sky rocket to stardom

when he meets the "sweetest gal on earth."

these boys are rising young

Margaret, Miss Tiffin, who scored in "Summer and Smoke" and in Billy Wilder's "One, Two, Three,"

exterior "State Fair" is her first musical and marks her singing debut. Singing beauty Ann-

me" in the arms of Boone.

plays "Abel Drake" and the role

To name the star of "State Fair" will be Alice Faye, who

wife and the mother of Boone and Tiffin. Once the "Queen" of the 20th Century Fox musical comedies, she can give a song bounce

her daughter "Never Say No (To A Man)" everyone is in for a welcome surprise.

"State Fair" marks the debut

for a motion picture. He has

Heaven," "It's The Little Things in Texas," "Wining and Eager," "More Than Just A Friend" and

sten favorites as "It Might As Well Be Spring," "Our State Fair," "That's For Me," "Falling

For Singing" and "Isn't It Kinda Fun" (one of the lavishly produced numbers which features Ann-Margret).



Bobby Darin, who has been referred to as "the most striking instance of the rebirth of showmanship," receives the most important role in his meteoric screen career in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "State Fair."

"State Fair." The new cinematic, co-starring Pat Boone, Pamela Tiffin, Ann-Margret, Tom Ewell and Alice Faye, begins at the ... Theater. Mar 20

RUSS TAMBLYN

Before "Twin Peaks"—the artist as a young man
Interview by SHARON LIND WILLIAMS

DON'T EVER CALL RUSS TAMBLYN A DANCER. Forget that he dazzled the world with his gravity defying flips in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* or that he tough-guy strutted through the alleys of *West Side Story*. Tamblyn is no heel-and-toe terpsichorean; he's an actor who also happens to be an acrobatic dancer. He talks with guarded candor, vacillating between pride and nervous insecurity, but beneath it all is a belief in himself.

When Tamblyn popped up on David Lynch's necromantic TV series *Twin Peaks* as the psychedelic psychiatrist Dr. Jacoby, it created quite a stir. Where had he been? What had he been doing? We all remember him from *Seven Brides*, *West Side Story*, *The Haunting*, and *tom thumb*. He had even been nominated for the Best Supporting Actor Academy Award for his role in *Peyton Place*. But then there was *High School Confidential*, a Japanese monster flick that he "doesn't really remember," his hook-up with Al Adamson for *Satan's Sadists*, and two obscurities, *Free Grass* and *Human Highway*, which were far beneath the actor's exhibited abilities. Tamblyn, however, seems to feel that being pegged a "dancer" is what has been most restricting. The "twin peaks" of Tamblyn's career might make an interesting film in itself. Although his profession is acting, his passion lies elsewhere.



Russ Tamblyn today: actor, artist and family man.

During the 1950s, Tamblyn was a popular member of the young Hollywood crowd and when he married starlet Venetia Stevenson in 1956 it was big news. The marriage, however, didn't last. In 1960 he again married, this time to a young English woman but that union also dissolved in 1980. Today, Tamblyn is happily wed to Bonnie Murray and the couple have two lovely daughters, China and Amber. He's a devoted father.

Los Angeles-born Rusty (December 30, 1934), as he was known in the early years of his career, made his film debut at the age of 14 in the anti-war cult film *The Boy with Green Hair*. He has

maintained a close friendship with the film's star, Dean Stockwell, ever since. But that first film was hardly Tamblyn's debut. He started his career in the performing arts many years earlier....

TAMBLYN: Actually, I started taking tap dancing lessons when I was eight. My parents had both been in show business. My father was a juvenile leading man/dancer in some early shows on Broadway, so I must have instinctively picked up an interest in performing. [Tamblyn also has a brother, Larry, the songwriter/keyboard artist for the *The Standells*.] When my parents entertained friends at parties, I tried to emulate them, and, according to my mother, I be-

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Russ Tamblyn, at the center of the action as Riff, leader of the Jets in this publicity still from the Robert Wise film *West Side Story*.

came quite a show-off.

When I was seven or eight, mom would take me to the local theater on Saturday mornings, where all the kids came to see serials and cartoons, and I used to run up on the stage during intermission. After several weeks of this, the manager started waiting for me backstage, but he could never catch me. He'd come running down the aisle and I'd leap off the stage and scoot under theseats where he could never find me. Finally, he caught me, talked to my mother and told her I was making a pest out of myself. So, she enrolled me in tap dancing lessons at a place in Inglewood called the Bob Cole Dance Studio.

The tap dancing lessons lasted for a year or so. While I was there, my teacher recommended a dramatic coach in Hollywood, named Grace Bowman. I began to see her and after a few months, she suggested that my parents enroll me in an organization called the Screen Children's Guild. This was about 1943, and there were thousands of kids in the Guild. So, when they sent you on job interviews, you were just one of maybe 20 others trying for the same part. We were put in categories according to age, height, etc. It was very expensive to belong to the Guild, and because of the numbers involved, their methods were questioned. Finally, they were put out of business. The word "racket" was used at the time.

They did, however, send me out on a couple of interviews. One was for a play called "The Stone Jungle." It was directed



Rusty Tamblyn warms up with some high-steppin' dance moves in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*.

by Lloyd Bridges, so he actually gave me my first professional acting job. I was nine or ten then, and made something like \$25 or \$35 a week. Dickie Moore, from the Our Gang comedies, was also in the play. He was probably the only well-known one.

During my two or three weeks on the play, a couple talent scouts and an agent, who I subsequently signed with, saw me. One of the scouts, Joseph Losey, was also directing *The Boy with Green Hair*. I auditioned for a couple parts and ended up playing one of the school kids.

About that same time, another talent scout from Paramount took me to meet Cecil B. DeMille, to test for him. Actually, it was more like a live performance, in a room with a one-way mirror, than a screen

test. The movie was *Samson and Delilah* [1949] and Richard Webb [TV's *Captain Midnight*], who was under contract at Paramount at the time, played Samson.

After I did the test scene, the door opened and in came DeMille with his entourage and he said, "Well, Russell, it was a very good scene and I want you to do the part." [King Sol as a boy] That was a big break for me. I had been just one of a bunch of kids runnin' around in *The Boy with Green Hair*, but now I had a featured role in an epic movie. After that, I worked a lot, at least two or three movies a year. I remember that I did a movie called *Reign of Terror* [1949], right after *Samson and Delilah*. Just a bunch of little parts in films.

FAX: You made both *Captain Carey USA*



and *Father of the Bride* in 1950, but neither of those were dancing parts

TAMBLYN: No, I didn't do any dancing again until I was about 17. Even though I was in these movies, I was still going to public school. In fact, it was then that I became interested in acrobatics. In junior high I would go out to the pits and practice back flips. Then in high school I joined the gymnastics team and became a very good tumbler. I won the Los Angeles City Championship competition, and a third place medal in the California State Championships [AAU Tumbling, competition against colleges like UCLA and USC.] So, it was tumbling that really got me into dancing

In 1952 I made two films for Warners *The Winning Team* with Ronald Reagan and Doris Day and *Retreat Hell*, in which I played a young marine in Korea. Fortunately, the director, Joseph Lewis, showed the movie to MGM, who were looking for contract players at the time. That was my second big break when MGM signed me

The first movie I did at MGM was *Take The High Ground* [1953], a film by Richard Brooks about infantry basic training, shot at Fort Bliss, Texas. I must have been 17 or 18 at the time. *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* [1954] came up right after that

FAX: So you got your first dancing role as Gideon, the youngest brother

TAMBLYN: Yes, but it came about quite by accident. The choreographer, Michael Kidd, told the studio he wanted six of the brothers [the seventh being Howard Keel] to be professional dancers. But MGM said, "Look, we have actors, not dancers, under



Tamblyn played a young marine in *Retreat Hell*.

contract here." They finally compromised when the studio offered four dancers, and two actors that were under contract. I was one of those actors. The other actor was Jeff Richards, a baseball player who had two left feet. Not much happened to him after that. That must've been strange to be one of the brothers in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, yet never dance a step. [laughs]

FAX: So, you were cast primarily as an actor, but, obviously, your acrobatic dancing scenes are one of the highlights of the film. When did MGM see the light?

TAMBLYN: That happened one day when Jeff Richards and I visited the barn raising scene set to watch the four "dancing brothers" rehearse. Michael Kidd called me over and said, "Rusty, somebody told me that

you're a good tumbler, that you can do some flips." So I did a back flip for him. "Fantastic!" he said, "We'll put it in a number." I told him I really wasn't a dancer, except for some tap dancing. But he said, "Listen, this is just like square dancing. All you have to do is lift your legs high. You can do a lot of acrobatic stuff. It's perfect." That's how I became a dancer in *Seven Brides*.

There was another number called "Go-in' Courtin'" in which Jane Powell is teaching us how to dance. This was a more natural number for me because I wasn't a dancer. It was much easier for me to look like I was learning how to dance than it was for the others. It's very difficult for a trained dancer to appear awkward—once the music starts, he automatically wants to posture. Fred Astaire was extremely fluid and Gene Kelly couldn't even turn without his arms coming up. [laughs] But I could move around, add a little personality to it and just have fun. Anyway, that's how this acrobat became a "dancer."

FAX: The barn-raising number, featuring you and an axe, was spectacular.

TAMBLYN: I went back and forth over the axe and then I added another section where I did, what I call "mule kicks." My father taught me those when I was nine or ten. "Mule kicks" are where you go back and forth from your feet to your hands

Anyway, after *Seven Brides* was released, my career really took off. *Dance* magazine photographed me for their cover and, suddenly, I was known as a dancer. Everybody'd say, "Where'd you study dancing?" They asked me that in every single interview, and I really had to play it down. I kept saying "I'm not a dancer, I'm an acrobat, a tumbler, and a gymnast...a gymnast who's not a very good dancer. Period!" But it just didn't seem to matter.

Then, after *Seven Brides*, I did another musical, *Hit the Deck* [1955], opposite Debbie Reynolds, where she and I did a few dance numbers and faked some singing. That was followed by *The Fastest Gun Alive* [1956] with Glenn Ford, which was a western, but they still wanted me to do a dance number in it. Then, of course, came *Tom Thumb* [1958], another musical.

After *Tom Thumb*, MGM loaned me to 20th Century-Fox for *Peyton Place* [1957], a solid dramatic role for a change. That's really where my roots are, where my heart is. I have always considered myself an actor, not a dancer. But *Seven Brides* was extremely popular, and as a result, I became extremely popular. They had me doing lots of fan magazine layouts for *Photoplay*, *Modern Screen*, and other movie magazines, mostly of me leaping around and jumping all over the place. Sometimes the caption would say "actor/dancer" and other times it was just, "dancer." Very seldom did it say "actor." Then, when I did *West Side Story* [1961], that was it! Nobody would believe I wasn't a dancer

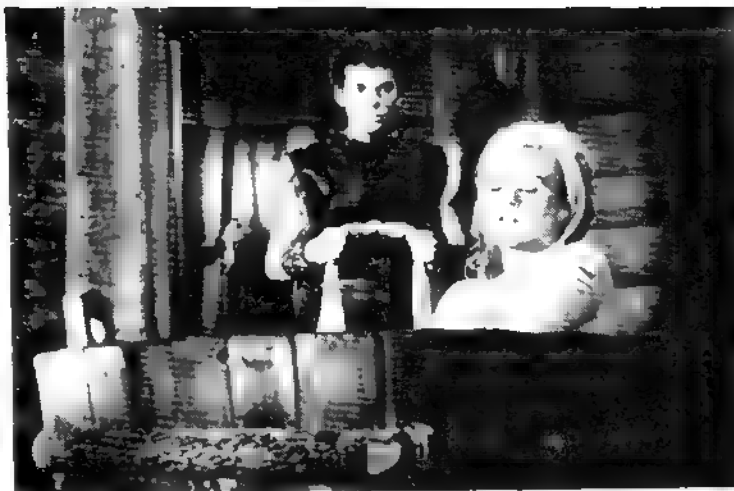
FAX: How did you get from the *Peyton Place* Oscar nomination to a low-budget film like *High School Confidential* [1958]?

Continued on next page

FILMFAZ 71



Opposite page, far left: While strolling down Rodeo Boulevard in 1955, reluctant dancer Russ Tamblyn casually "flips" for his fiancée, Venetia Stevenson. Top right: Young "Rusty" Tamblyn as young King Saul in Cecil B. DeMille's *Sargon and Delilah*. Bottom right: *The Kid from Cleveland* "introduced" young Tamblyn as "Rusty...and his 30 godfathers, the Cleveland Indians Baseball Team. This page above: Tamblyn sits perched atop a stack of oversized prop coins in *Tom Thumb*.



Left, Tambllyn received a Best Supporting Actor nomination for his performance in *Peyton Place*. Right, Tambllyn prepares to kill in *The Long Ships*.

RUSS TAMBLYN *continued*

TAMBLYN: I was under contract to MGM at the time. So, after *Peyton Place*, I went to England to make *tom thumb*. And the studio knew I was going into the Army soon, so when I got back, they had *High School Confidential*, all ready for me. They literally picked me up from the airport and drove me straight to the studio. We started shooting the day I got back. To tell you the truth, I hated it at the time. My agent and I both thought the script was terrible, and he tried to get me out of it, but the studio threatened suspension if I didn't do the picture. Ironically, just after I started *High School Confidential*, I was nominated for the Best Supporting Actor Academy Award for my work in *Peyton Place*.
FAX: How do you feel about *High School Confidential* now?

TAMBLYN: Oddly enough, my opinion has changed. *Peyton Place* was a huge movie and was nominated for 11 or 12 Academy Awards. And that was followed by *Return to Peyton Place*, and then they did a TV series. The whole thing was a

very big deal. But what's still very strange to me is that *High School Confidential* has become a very popular "cult" film while *Peyton Place* has been completely forgotten. [laughs] Now, 20 years later, whenever I mention *Peyton Place*, people say, "Oh, were you in that television series?" Most people don't even remember the film—it's the TV series with Mia Farrow that they recall. I've been invited to speak a couple of times when *High School Confidential* was being shown and the audience really filled up. But, if they re-ran *Peyton Place*, nobody'd be there! *Peyton Place* was a class-act movie and nobody cares about it, while *Confidential*, a "B" movie with dumb lines and a silly plot, has continued to grow in popularity.

I mean, in the film some girl is sitting in the cafeteria, shaking because she didn't get her marijuana. It was *stupid*! Just a really silly film. And no one has ever figured out what Mamie Van Doren's character was. She's my Aunt? It was weird!

FAX: Still, it has a dedicated following.

TAMBLYN: And that was certainly a lesson to me, later on, when I got involved in

art. It was then I realized that it didn't really matter what you did, that, somewhere, there's always an audience out there.

FAX: Getting back to *tom thumb*, is it true that, when George Pal made his original presentation to MGM, you were not his first choice for the title role—that he actually had Donald O'Connor in mind?

TAMBLYN: I've read that too. And I also heard that he wanted Mickey Rooney. Maybe that's not actually true, but I remember he gave me directions to do one scene "like Mickey Rooney would do it." [laughs], and I've never forgotten that.

tom thumb really was a great experience—and extremely creative. I asked for Alex Romero to be my choreographer. We had met on *Seven Brides* when he was assistant choreographer, and I had requested him for the shovel dance number in *Fastest Gun Alive*, so I already knew that we worked well together. He understood my style of dancing and didn't always insist that I do it his way. He also knew I wasn't a very good dancer, so he always found great props for me to work with [laughs].
FAX: You honestly don't think much of yourself as a dancer?

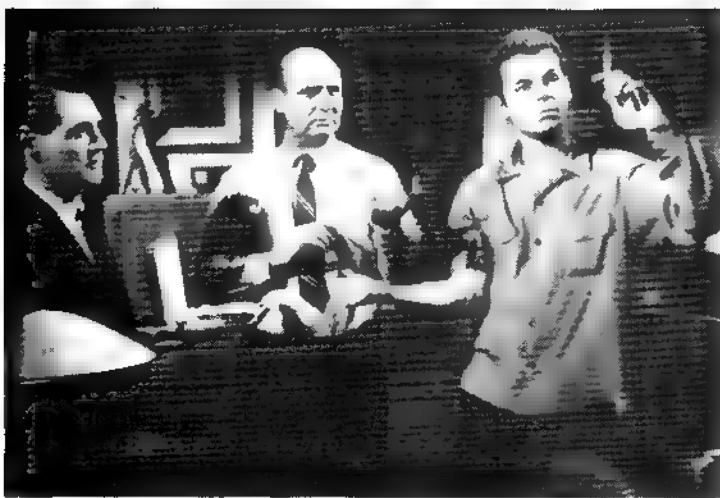
TAMBLYN: Well, I didn't. But I'm talking about a particular time zone of my life. That was certainly the way I felt. Years later, though, while doing an interview, I was asked where I studied dancing. My reply was, "Well, I haven't. I'm what you'd call a 'street dancer.' I've always liked dancing at parties and on furniture in the house, but I'm basically an acrobat who never studied dancing." Then he said, "Now wait a minute! You worked with Alex Romero, Hermes Pan, who was Fred Astaire's choreographer, Jerome Robbins, and Michael Kidd. You not only *studied*, but you studied with some of the *masters*!" It was that remark that made me realize that he was right. I *did* study. Maybe it was on-the-job training, and I was slower than the other dancers, especially on *West Side Story*, but I actually did study.

FAX: You were *slow* on *West Side Story*?

TAMBLYN: A slow learner compared to all the others who had ballet training. Jerome Robbins [the choreographer] was a very strict disciplinarian and dance master from the New York School of Ballet. So this was



On the set of *Hit the Deck*, Vic Damone (left) and Tambllyn (right) clown around with Tony Martin.



Left, undercover cop Tamblin feigns "shooting up" for Jackie Coogan in *High School Confidential*. Right, Tamblin, Johnson and Bloom in *The Haunting*.

the first time it was really difficult for me. It took me *much* longer to learn the steps. In fact, I was almost the last one to learn them. In this case, I really *did* study dancing. We spent three or four months rehearsing, and I was dancing every day all day long! I was in class!

So, in a sense, I really *did* study. I was young and acrobatic and had a good sense of rhythm, movement, and coordination. It was at this point that I had to admit to myself that I really was a dancer. Just a different kind of dancer from Donald O'Connor, Fred Astaire or Gene Kelly. I was an *acrobatic* dancer. Oddly enough, even other dancers admire my work. That surprises me, because I'm not sure what category they could really *put* me in. Plus, there were a lot of things, dance-wise, that I just couldn't do. If you look *closely*, you can see my mistakes. [laughs]

But, I also had a lot of fun doing things that dancers weren't really supposed to do, but then, what is right and wrong? The one thing that I didn't do very well was follow someone else's style. Many choreographers have certain identifiable moves and all their dancers move just like them. FAX: Absolutely. Bob Fosse [*All That Jazz*, *Cabaret*, *Sweet Charity*] comes to mind. A Fosse number is always recognizable.

TAMBLYN: And the Fosse dancers! Shirley Maclaine is one. Some choreographers are strict disciplinarians who insist that you learn by mimicking them. I never did that very well, so they either had to put me in front or way in the back. But I just happened to be one of the lucky ones who got the good parts, so they stuck me up front. FAX: Well, they certainly put you up front in *West Side Story*. You open the film.

TAMBLYN: But if you look at that opening dance sequence, you'll see that everyone *else* is dancing. I'm just walking. I'm like, so "Mr. Cool," out in front and sort of strutting. I did a lot of strutting in the beginning.

FAX: Well, you were Riff, hot-shot gang leader. You're suppose to strut. [laughs]

TAMBLYN: Something happened not too long ago that gave me quite a thrill about my Riff persona. Jerome Robbins never wanted me to do any acrobatics or tumbling in my dance numbers, so it wasn't

until he was off the picture, and one of his assistants took over, that I was allowed to do what I did best. For the gymnasium sequence, I did a round off back-flip with a full twist and a nip up, plus a lot of other acrobatic moves, which is what you see in the film. Anyway, my proudest moment came recently when I went to see a Jerome Robbins show that included two numbers from *West Side Story*, and the dancer who played Riff did a round-off back-flip. I



Russ goofs off in a can during *West Side Story*.

knew that Jerome Robbins had choreographed it, and I thought "My God! Robbins has finally come around to using tumbling as part of Riff's character!" That was *not* in his original choreography; he got it from *me*! That really boosted my ego. FAX: Robbins was an incredible talent.

TAMBLYN: A giant and such an egomaniac, in the sense that he wanted everything to be *his way*. But I did create something for my character that he has now accepted as part of the role.

FAX: After *West Side Story*, you appeared in *How The West Was Won* [1962], *Follow The Boys* [1963], and then the classic ghost film, *The Haunting* [1963] with Julie Harris, Richard Johnson and Claire Bloom.

TAMBLYN: You know, I actually turned *The Haunting* down the first time it was offered to me. I was living in Paris and

Robert Wise [the director; he also directed *West Side Story*], who was in England, sent me the script to read. I thought all the other parts were great but, at that time—and don't ask me why—I didn't like the part that I had in it. I didn't like it at all for some reason, maybe just stupidity. I sent a note back to him "Thank you very much, but no thanks." Then I flew back to Los Angeles. I thought that Wise was just offering me the role, no big deal. But when I got back to L.A., once again my agent said, "The studio called and said if you don't do that film, *The Haunting*, you'll go back on suspension." Since I really didn't want to go months and months without getting paid, I jumped on a plane for England and did the picture. Of course, now I look back on it, and it's one of my favorite films.

I don't know *what* possessed me to turn it down in the first place. It was a *good part*! Wise added a couple scenes for me, but, essentially, I was simply the arrogant collegeboy, obnoxious and sarcastic. So when I read it, I failed to see what a good part it really was. Fortunately, I ended up doing it. The house they filmed in at Stratford-on-Avon, which is up in the northern part of England, was a real old, haunted house that dated back to the 12th century. It was both scary and an extremely interesting film to work on.

FAX: After *The Haunting* you appeared in *The Long Ships* [1964], *Son of a Gunfighter* [1966] and *War of the Gargantuas* [1967] a Toho monster movie in which you played an American scientist. Then in 1970 came a biker picture, *Satan's Sadists*, that has garnered a lot of attention, not only for its violent subject matter, but also because it launched Al Adamson and Sam Sherman's Independent-International Pictures. [See Sam Sherman interview also in this issue.] Playing a Charles Manson-type murderer in *Satan's Sadists* was a long way from an Oscar nomination for *Peyton Place* and critical acclaim in *West Side Story*. What happened?...

TAMBLYN: In the early '60s, you might say I was on the ground floor of the hippie movement, part of the seed source. I dropped out of the entertainment business. I was deeply into the whole beatnik thing.

Continued on next page

which was predecessor to the hippie era. I was particularly into art. During my Army leaves, I went to New York and San Francisco and bought books at the City Lights book store. I also wrote a lot of poetry—actually, I emulated e.e. cummings, stealing much of his style and phrases.

Then, when I received my Army discharge, I met Henry Miller. [Miller was the author of the controversial novels *Tropic of Cancer* and *Tropic of Capricorn*.] I had read his "Tropic" books and became a big fan. My friend, Joe Grey and I used to talk about Miller all the time. Joe was a film extra and we shared an interest in philosophy among other things. I was living in a beach house at the time, when one day there was a knock at the door. It was Joe and he said, "Look who I ran into!" It was Henry Miller! For me, this was like heaven. It was like meeting the Queen of England!

Henry and I established a relationship, and sometime later, in the early '60s, I moved from the beach to Pacific Palisades where I bought a huge house. The place was mammoth: five-bedrooms, four-bathrooms, a full-size bowling alley, a huge

game room, a swimming pool and a tennis court. After I moved in to this mansion, I decided to have a party for Henry. He wanted to meet a few show business people. So, I had a big barbecue one night and invited Yvette Mimeux and some others. One of the people I invited was Dean Stockwell, an old friend from my MGM days. When we were kids we used to go trick-or-treating together on Halloween. I knew him pretty well, but hadn't seen him in years. When I invited Dean to this party for Miller, he said, "Great! Is it okay if I invite," and I thought he said, "Alice and Shelly Berman." I thought he meant the comedian. I even told my wife at that time, "You know Shelly Berman, the comedian? Well, Stockwell's gonna bring him." Instead, it turned out to be Wallace and Shirley Berman. Wallace Berman was one of the heaviest artists of the Beat Generation. He lived in San Francisco and did little books of poetry and art. He was a father figure for many of the early artists. Allen Ginsberg actually used to go and sit at his feet. He was a true heavyweight of the period.

But when he and his wife, Shirley were at the party, they hardly spoke to anybody. They were very humble, quiet peo-



Friends John Drew Barrymore and his actress wife, Cara Williams throw a party for Russ Tamblin prior to his induction into the Army.

ple who just sat in a corner while everybody else was boogieing around and playing pool. I was quite fascinated by him.

After the party, Berman sent me a thank-you note—actually one of his books, a collection of poetry and photographs. Very contemporary things. When you opened it up, there was a little pocket that contained some small poems, beautiful and strange poems. One was a hand with a big finger stickin' up and the poem under it read something like, "This is the only blossom I have." [laughs].

FAX: Sounds almost like a "who's who" of the Beat Generation. What were you doing while all this was going on?

TAMBLYN: I became so involved in art that I even turned down several television shows. I was actually offered a part on the TV series *Gilligan's Island*.

FAX: Which part?

TAMBLYN: Gilligan. There were a few other series, too but I decided to turn them all down. I was searching for something more in my life. I moved from Pacific Palisades to Topanga Canyon and devoted my life to fine art. But it was also during this period that my money ran out. I was still getting some residuals, but I was completely into fine art, working all day, and didn't do much acting.

FAX: What form of art?

TAMBLYN: Mixed media—a combination of paint, drawing, and collage. I also had a little printing press and printed some of my poems and other poets' work. Photography and filmmaking was another interest—I did some short 8mm art films where I would draw on the film or use Letraset. I did all sorts of experimental stuff with it. A full range of artistic expression.

Most people think of artists as painters, but painting is just one of a hundred mediums an artist can use. I actually stopped painting when I became, what I consider to be, an artist, which is sort of ironic. I don't even think I had an agent then. In



On location for *Satan's Sadists*, Russ Tamblin packs a suitcase that looks suspiciously artistic.

Topanga, where I was living, people were flowing in and out like *crazy*. I was meeting all kinds of people and trying to turn them on to art, too. At least get them to channel their wasted energy into something creative. I believe very strongly in art as a way of channeling energy in a positive, creative way.

FAX: It seems as though acting had taken a back seat to your creative passions.

TAMBLYN: Everything, both in fine art and the performing arts, calls for passion, but with a difference. Acting, basically, is for an audience who shows its approval by supporting the film or play with dollars. You hope your performance makes *their* heads spin. But working in the fine arts is *personal*. I want to do something that makes *my own* head spin, that turns *me* on.

FAX: You were searching for personal satisfaction....

TAMBLYN: Yes, and that's where you, as an artist, somehow reach a deeper root.

FAX: You mentioned you didn't have an agent at this time. How did you hook up with Al Adamson for *Satan's Sadists*?

TAMBLYN: During this period, when I was deep into art, I got a call from Al Adamson, who said, "I'm making a mo-

torcycle movie. Do you want to do it?" One of my favorite films had always been *The Wild One*, so the idea of a biker movie really intrigued me. I just went in and did it. I even got to do it *my way*, rewriting a couple of the scenes to my own satisfaction.

[*Satan's Sadists*, in which Tamblyn played Anchor, reportedly cost \$50,000 to make and has grossed—no pun intended—\$10 million in worldwide release.. This, however, is unverified. It was Adamson's first film under the Independent International banner, helping to subsidize subsequent releases.]

FAX: Originally, *Dracula vs. Frankenstein* was meant to be the sequel to *Satan's Sadists*, even though you die at the end of the first picture. You are, however, still seen in one scene on a motorcycle.

TAMBLYN: There was one scene in *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*, but I have very little memory of it. I was heavy into art at that time, and I remember getting a call from Al, asking me if I wanted to work a couple days. I don't think I worked much more than that, then I got back to the studio.

FAX: Lon Chaney, Jr. was in that film. Did you have an opportunity to meet him?

TAMBLYN: Very briefly. I think I was in a scene under a pier, where he was killing

people or swinging an ax around or something. I have only a vague memory of the whole thing.

FAX: Was this a difficult time for you, during the late '60s and early '70s?

TAMBLYN: It was a very intense period, extremely interesting, and probably the most creative time in my life. I had my first fine art exhibition in 1970. I rented a place up in Topanga called The Community House and had an art show. Neil Young came in and did the music for it. [In 1982 Tamblyn made a film with Young, *Human Highway*, directed by Bernard Shakey and Dean Stockwell. In addition to Young, Tamblyn and Stockwell, the film also stars Dennis Hopper. Two slow-witted red neck gas station attendants—Young and Tamblyn—live in the shadow of a nuclear power plant. Young gets hit on the head causing a fantasy sequence which features the new wave group Devo.]

FAX: Some people say that you were heavy into drugs during this period, that that's why you didn't make many films.

TAMBLYN: I've heard that too, but it's not true. If it *were* true, I would tell you. But the truth is, I was just into other things, not drugged out. My artist friends Wal-

Continued on next page



Photos for this article courtesy of Sam Sherman



Left, top, *Anchor* (Tamblyn) watches as other members of his gang hassle some customers in a highway diner. Left bottom, Tamblyn crashes the cook-out of some ill-fated female campers. Above, foreign *Satan's Sadists* poster.

lace Berman and George Herms and I tried the lightweight stuff, played around with grass, but we knew the difference. We knew that the harder stuff was extremely deadly for an artist. We knew that it could affect our work to the point where our art wouldn't be an expression of us, but of the drugs. It's hard to explain, but drugs and art just don't mix. Topanga was populated by several hundred people who made the "street scene," but there were five or six of us who kept away from the drugs for the most part.

I tried cocaine, and found out I was allergic to it. Never tried heroin. I took psychedelic drugs a couple of times but never more than once a year, and I never took LSD as a fun thing. A lot of people in Topanga at that time would take LSD and go into town to party. I didn't, but I know I had the same sort of reputation.

Anyway, I grew my hair long in the early '60s, before anyone else, and dropped out of show business. The word got around real fast with agents and business people. They would say, "What happened to Russ Tamblin?" "Oh, he's out of it on drugs." They couldn't deal with the reality, if you know what I mean. I dallied with drugs, but I was an extreme lightweight and that's the honest truth.

FAX: A contemporary of yours, Dennis Hopper, publically admits how "out-of-it" he was during the late '60s early '70s.

TAMBLYN: Now, there's a guy who was heavy into it, but then he didn't get into art as much as I did. He stayed pretty much into films—and that's an area where you could take drugs. You're entertaining other people so you can just get whacked out. You're not really trying to find any truth in yourself. But if you're digging deep into yourself, drugs, isn't the answer and *never* was. I was one of the few guys in the

early '60s who thought Timothy Leary was a jerk! I was totally against what Leary was doing.



In what qualified as little more than a cameo, Tamblin also appeared in *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*.

Every time he'd make his little speech ["Turn on, Tune in, Drop out"] about being the guru of that scene, I just thought, man, this guy's blowin' it for everybody!

FAX: Do you feel you have been misunderstood by the film industry?

TAMBLYN: Definitely. My art was also misinterpreted because it dealt with "visual impact." It didn't necessarily have "meaning." A lot of my work came from some gut source and had about as much meaning as a bird singing. But if you tried to figure out what a bird was singing about you'd miss the song.

That's basically where my head was at: art and creativity. Many people would look at my art and say, "Ah, he's out on drugs! He's got to be on drugs to do this kind of stuff!" They didn't understand the art, so they thought the artist was on drugs.

I was also doing gallery shows, even making my own picture frames. When I would have a show, I would make up my own list of people that I wanted to invite, and print the announcements. That meant

I had to photograph something, print it myself, put the type on a little hand-type printing press, clean all the type—I mean it was an extraordinary amount of work. It was *definitely* a labor of love! It certainly wasn't because I was making a lot of money, because I wasn't.

FAX: After *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*, it seems as if you made films simply when the mood struck you.

TAMBLYN: Yeah, that would be about it.

FAX: Was the necessity simply for money or for another reason?

TAMBLYN: Usually, it was for the money, or if the part looked like it would be fun. I did *Win, Place, or Steal* with Dean Stockwell because we'd been like brothers. [*Win, Place or Steal*, 1975, a.k.a. *Three for the Money*, a.k.a. *Just Another Day at the Races*. Also in this racetrack comedy were Alex Karras, McLean Stevenson and Harry Dean Stanton.]

FAX: You mentioned earlier that you have turned down a lot of TV offers. Why did you decide to do *Twain Peaks*?



Left, Tamblin "initiates" Richard Beymer in *Free Grass*. Above, a hazy Russ Tamblin presides over a psychedelic dream sequence also in *Free Grass*.

TAMBLYN: Well, the timing was perfect and I'm a great admirer of David Lynch. I even have one of his early art pieces from the late 1960s. It's a black-and-white etching that has these little twin peaks in it all over the place. He must have been thinking about a mythical place called Twin Peaks even back then.

FAX: It's interesting that you and Richard Beymer are on the series together. Have you maintained a friendship with him over the years since *West Side Story*?

TAMBLYN: Not really. Our paths have crossed, but usually because of our mutual interest in art. We did *West Side Story* together, but our personal bond is not through that film, rather from our involvement in the fine arts. Richard is also an artist and our work has been featured together in a couple of contemporary art books. Our work was in there as artists, not as actors, celebrity artists, if you understand. Years ago he made a couple of 16mm films, brought them up to Topanga and we invited some people over to see Richard's films. We were always running somebody's films on the walls. It was a very art-oriented group of people. We weren't sitting around trying to figure out ways to make [laughs] money. [In 1969, around the time of *Satan's Sadists*, Tamblin and Beymer made another film together called *Free Grass*, a.k.a. *Scream Free* directed by Bill Brame who also did *The Cycle Savages*. Beymer falls for Lana Wood but the couple needs money so he helps gang-leader Tamblin smuggle grass from Mexico to L.A. on motorcycles. Some narcs get bumped off and Beymer objects. Tamblin puts LSD in his drink. Also in the cast are Lindsay Crosby (Bing's son), Jody McCrea (Joel's son), and Casey Kasem. Released by Hollywood Star Pictures.]

FAX: So you and Richard are both artists.

TAMBLYN: Yes, and there are several other artistic people on *Twin Peaks*. It's quite amazing to me. Grace Zibriski, who plays the mother, is both a poet and an artist. Piper Laurie does artwork and Don Davis, who plays the Major, is a really fine artist. Of course, Richard's into art and I'm into art and David Lynch is into art. I doubt Lynch did this on purpose when he hired people, but it certainly is interesting.

FAX: Did Lynch, himself, approach you for the role of Dr. Jacoby?

TAMBLYN: Yeah. I went in to see him just when *Twin Peaks* was about to start. Every agent in town was trying to get their actors in to see him, but he wasn't seeing anybody. He had his own list of people he wanted to see. I was on that list. I'm sure it came about through a recommendation from Stockwell and Dennis [Hopper]. Dean has never confirmed it, but I'm sure that's what happened.

FAX: Jacoby is really an outrageous character. But he also has a handle on who he is, what he wants and how he wants to live.

TAMBLYN: It's interesting you should say that because that's the way I felt about him. Many people have described Jacoby as weird and bizarre. But I never saw him that way. I saw him as *eccentric*, consumed with compulsive habits, like his Hawaiian

clothes. But I never really thought of him as "weird." [Author's comment: Regrettably, the fate of *Twin Peaks* is undecided. We may not get to see much more of Tamblin's Jacoby. In fact, we wish there had been more of him on the show. The reader can come to his or her own conclusion as to how much there is of Tamblin in the character, or vice versa.]

FAX: So, you're still very involved with your art, but what about upcoming films?

TAMBLYN: I'm preparing for one art show right now, and I'm also doing some collages. I have a little studio and I may have an exhibition sometime. I don't know when because art is something I like to do without being pressured.

As far as movies, nothing right now, but I am reading a couple things. I'm waiting for something really interesting to come along. I like parts to be interesting, challenging. I like parts that are out there.

FAX: How do you feel now when you look back on your life?

TAMBLYN: Sometimes it's interesting, sometimes it's boring. I accept it as a part of the business. If you do interviews, eventually you're going to be asked all sorts of things about the past. I'm a lot more mellow than I used to be. There was a point during the '60s, when I wouldn't talk about the past at all. In Topanga, no one ever talked to me about movies. There was also a long period where I didn't do any interviews, and no one asked me anything.

FAX: Any regrets? Anything you wish you had done that you haven't had the opportunity to do or are still looking forward to doing?

TAMBLYN: Yes, quite frankly. I've heard people say that if they had their life to live over they'd live it exactly the same way. Well, if I had my life to live over, I'd lead it completely differently. [laughs] I would not be an actor. I'd certainly stay in the creative area, but I would probably become more involved in music. God, to tell you the truth, I'm interested in *everything* except what I've done. [laughs] You know what I mean? It seems perfectly reasonable to me that if you lead one kind of life you'd be interested in trying another.

I envy businessmen who run companies and corporations. I would love to have a great business mind. I'm extremely interested in *everybody's* life but my own. Any life except one that involves violence. I wouldn't like being a cop or a soldier, and I wouldn't like to live a sad, tragic life, like being an alcoholic. But I'll tell you something I would *love* to be if I had a life to live over. I'd like to be a writer. I'd go off, get a house on a lake someplace in Colorado and study writing. I certainly wouldn't be living in Hollywood, that's for sure!

FAX: You sound as if you might be happier on a mountain somewhere, metaphorically speaking, of course, free to pursue your art just as you did in the Topanga Canyon.

TAMBLYN: Well, I probably would, but it's hard to get away from a place like that. It was hard enough to get out of Topanga, if you know what I mean. It's hard to come down off the mountain....

'70s. I was working on a film which started at 8:00 in the morning. Around 11:00 that night, I went to the Palomino Club for the first time in my life. [The Palomino is a famous country and western club located in North Hollywood.] And when I left that night, I got stopped. I'd been following that whole controversy back then, the speculations about John Holmes and Eddy Haskell were still raging. [In the '70s, there was speculation that Ken Osmond was, in reality, John Holmes (now deceased), porno star.] I knew that Osmond had become a cop and he worked out of Van Nuys. I also knew the thing with John Holmes just couldn't be true. But it was weirdly intriguing. So, the night I got arrested I was trying to think of what to do when I got to the station. I was talking to the cops who were taking me in, and they were actually very friendly. I asked them a little bit about Ken Osmond, and I told them about the Holmes thing. They said, well, Osmond's with us now. He had been with the Foothill division, but he's transferred to North Hollywood. In fact, they said, I think he's on duty tonight. So I said, geez, I picked a perfect night to get arrested! If you guys talk to him, tell him to come back to my cell and say hello. Which he did. He came back an hour or so later that night.

After we'd been talking for a while, he asked me what I was in for, a couple of traffic warrants? I said, no, believe it or not, I'm in for drunk driving. He said, god, I would have been more inclined to think you were in here for being on speed. Then a month or two later, my case went to trial because there were various improprieties. The two arresting officers were making up stories and contradicting each other. My blood test got thrown out, so it got to be a matter of my word against theirs.

Anyway, I decided to get some character witnesses of people who were with me that night. Then they could say what condition they thought I was in. These cops were trying to paint a ridiculous picture of me. But I remembered every word of the conversation I'd had with them, including asking them to bring Ken Osmond back to my cell. So I went out and found Ken Osmond and asked him to come in. The prosecutor tried to bring him in as a witness and was so adamant that he decided he was going to stir up some controversy. He suddenly said, I understand that you and Mr. Legend had a conversation in regards to a Mr. John Holmes. And then he said, 'Could you explain to us who Mr. John Holmes is?' This is a direct quote from Osmond, "He's another actor who has physical characteristics similar to mine!" That's how he put it. [laughter]

I had a tough time holding it, because there was a jury there. We'd already established that Ken had been an actor once. Anyway, it finally got reduced to reckless driving, and the charge got dropped. By the way, the prosecutor's name was Mr. Semen—that's true, and that just *has* to be in the record! [laughter]

The Mogul, the Man, the Fan...

SAM SHERMAN

The Cinderella (Frankenstein?) story of a former fan who parlayed his keen business sense and market savvy into what has become Independent-International Pictures

"I'll never forget the day John Bloom was being made up as the Frankenstein monster. He was moaning with his eyes closed and his hands clasped over his stomach. He said, 'I hope we're going to get this done on time! I don't have time for this! I hope we're going to be finished!' He was muttering, muttering, muttering, so I finally said, 'John, what's the matter?' He said, 'This is tax season. I've got to be working tomorrow on income taxes!' He was a tax accountant. He was in films as a monster only because he was 7' 4"! [laughs] Now, that's what you call Theater of the Absurd!" —Sam Sherman, Producer

Interview by TOM WEAVER

It's the sort of Cinderella story that warms the hearts of B-movie maniacs. A film fan from his early youth, New York-born Sam Sherman has parlayed his love for and knowledge of motion pictures into a life-long career. Sherman began as a contributor to Warren Publications like *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and *Wildest Westerns* and then moved into the more adventurous areas of film distribution and production. Admittedly, the drive-in style movies made by his Independent-International Pictures Corp. aren't exactly the kind that are talked about much on Oscar night. But—importantly for Sherman—they've been consistently popular and profitable, and—importantly for us—they've provided some memorable last (or nearly last) looks at such favorite actors as Lon Chaney, J. Carrol Naish, Robert Livingston, Kent Taylor, Reed Hadley, Donald Barry, the Ritz Brothers, and many other movie greats of years past. The friendly and eminently knowledgeable Sherman shoots from the hip as he talks about the only film company that hard-nosed aggressiveness, wistful Hollywood nostalgia, and gore-oriented marketing ever combined to build.

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Facing page: During a break in the filming of *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*, Sam Shortman gives new promotional insights by wiring into the Frankenstein Monster's (John Bloom) brain. Zander Vorkov and director Al Adamson join in the fun. This page top: Promotional painting by well-known comic artist, Gray Morrow, for *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*. Above: MP's new-familiar logo. Inset: An original newspaper ad slick for *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*.



**A NEW 1930's THRILLER—
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COUNT DRACULA the FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER
the DOCTOR of DOOM the MAD ZOMBIE

DRACULA vs. FRANKENSTEIN

J. CARROL NAISH LON CHANEY ANTHONY EISLEY
REGINA CARROL ANGELO ROSSITTO
RUSS TAMBLYN and JIM DAVIS Music Score by
WILLIAM LAVA

INDEPENDENT-INTERNATIONAL
Pictures Corp.

COLOR by DeLuxe

GP

FAX: How early in your life did you know that you wanted to become part of the motion picture industry?

SHERMAN: Like a lot of young people, I was a hobbyist in still photography and movies. I made my own little 8mm movies, collected 8mm films, watched early TV, recorded old background music off TV, etc., and wanted to get into the film industry. Around 1956, there were three colleges that offered major studies in film techniques: UCLA, USC, and City College of New York. Going to California, obviously, would have been too expensive. Also, I graduated high school at the age of 16, an *immature* 16. So, it was just not in the cards that I would be set loose on my own to go out to the West Coast. Anyway, had that happened, I probably would have ended up at one of the big studios—they always “shopped” those schools.

FAX: So you ended up attending CCNY....

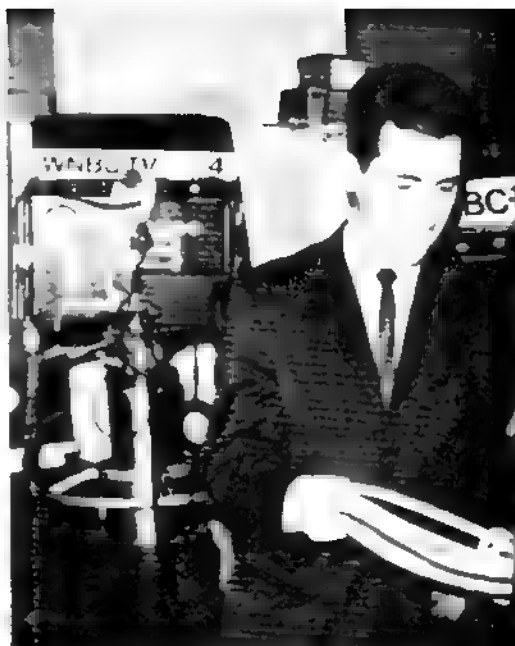
SHERMAN: I read about the City College Film Institute in an issue of *Popular Photography*, and it motivated me to try to go there. Basically, the City College Film Institute was created during the Second World War to make training documentaries for the Office of War Information. They were tied in with government, documentary and more artistic films, and I was thrust into this kind of setting as a fan of B pictures—horror pictures, serials, westerns, things like that.

One semester I had to make a short film. Unable to get an idea that would work, I kept delaying it. I got down to the last week or two of the term, and the professor teaching the course—who was also the head of the Film Institute—threatened to fail me if I didn’t make a film. Most of the other students were making films that went along with the expectations of the Film Institute: an old man in a park feeding pigeons, a ballerina dancing in a very fancy atrium while a man does a clay sculpture of her, and so on.

So the professor said to me, “Why don’t you make a movie about a vampire who raids a blood bank?” He said this because I was part of the Student Government Cultural Agency that showed rented films: Harold Lloyd in *Grandma’s Boy* [1922], *East of Eden* [1955], *Love Me or Leave Me* [1955], etc. When we ran out of money, I brought in films that I owned or had borrowed from friends. I showed *The Mask of Fu Manchu* [1932] with Boris Karloff, *Flash Gordon* serials, whatever else I could find. It’s hard to think that in those years people were so far removed from these kinds of films that the school came out against me. The school paper wrote me up as if I were trashing the school’s reputation—as if I were showing hard-core pornography! [laughs] But we’re talking about another era.

FAX: You were branded “the horror man!”

SHERMAN: So...I decided to challenge the professor by making a picture like the

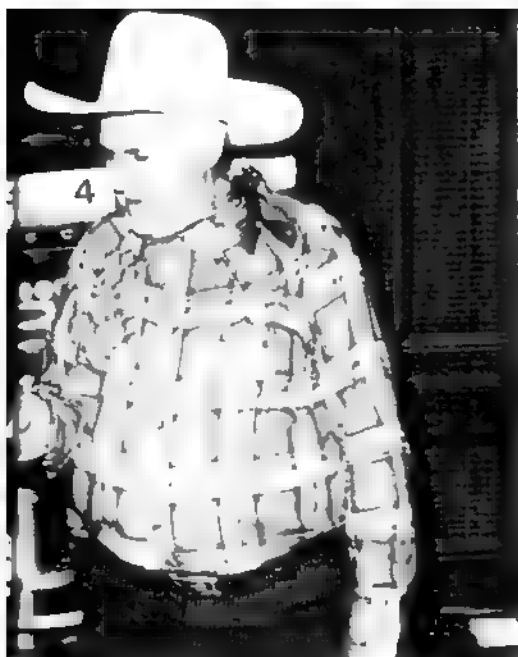


Appearing on NBC's *Today* show in 1963, cowboy he

vampire film he had suggested. I came up with an idea to do something called *The Weird Stranger*, and I got my friend Norman Michaels [later the co-author of *The Films of Sherlock Holmes*] to star in it. He was a great fan of Lon Chaney, Sr.'s and fancied himself a makeup artist. He played a character in black, a Phantom of the Opera type. This was my introduction to quickie moviemaking. I shot this less-than-one-reel, 16mm film in one day. Everyone



Forrest J Ackerman took Sam Sherman to meet Boris Karloff and Hazel Court at Producers Studio in Hollywood, where Roger Corman was wrapping up the final day of shooting for AIP's *The Raven*. Also present that day were Peter Lorre, Vincent Price, Alex Gordon, and AIP chief Jim Nicholson.



Ken Maynard gives Sherman some tips on the lariat.

else had been shooting for months and months. What I did was make a very detailed script/shot breakdown. We started in a basement on 47th Street near 9th Avenue in Manhattan. Then we shot up at Biograph Studios in the Bronx, ending up at my house in the Bronx and my screening room in the basement, where we shot the end of the picture! We cut it together rather quickly. I dubbed lip-synched dialogue in, along with snippets from old background scores from '30s and '40s horror films. So, you can guess what the thing was like. In short, I ended up with the most advanced film made that term, but done very, very quickly. The professor didn't like the idea that I was putting him down—obviously, I had made the film as a reaction to his comment—but he had to give me an "A" because it was technically head and shoulders above anything else that had been done that term.

Years later, I went back to the Film Institute when they did a retrospective of past years. Of course, they have made much more sophisticated films since I was there. Then they made an announcement: "And now we're going to show our favorite film in the history of the whole City College Film Institute." It was *The Weird Stranger*! And no one even knew I was there! [laughs] FAX: You also worked for Warren Publications on a variety of film magazines.

SHERMAN: When the first issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* came out, I was impressed by it and wrote to Jim Warren. Norman Michaels had a big collection of stills and other material, so Norman and I started doing some research, supplying stills to FM. And that got me involved in working for *Favorite Westerns of Filmland*. From doing research, I ended up writing articles for *Famous Monsters*, *Favorite Westerns*, and eventually became editor of *Favorite Westerns*, which became *Wildest Westerns*. Then I brought in my friend Bob Price, also a historian/collector/researcher, to help edit *Wildest Westerns*. When that got to the point where we felt it was going

to be discontinued by Jim Warren, we came up with the idea to do a catch-all magazine [*Screen Thrills Illustrated*] that covered what the other magazines did not: all the comic book characters that had been adapted for serials or films, the Bowery Boys, Laurel and Hardy, the Marx Brothers, right down the line. This was before Andy Warhol, before the nostalgia explosion. Essentially, we had invented the first publication of its kind that was nationally sold. We felt that writing about films we found interesting became a rallying point for other fans who liked similar things. We quickly rose from nothing to having more subscriptions than *Famous Monsters*. But it was ahead of its time. I'm pleased that there are people I've met through the years that enjoyed it, and people that have taken up "the good battle," like *Filmfax* is now. It's good that the interest has continued, because it's really a very narrow spectrum of interest compared to general interest magazines.

FAX: Jim Warren has gotten much bad press over the years. What are your memories of Warren?

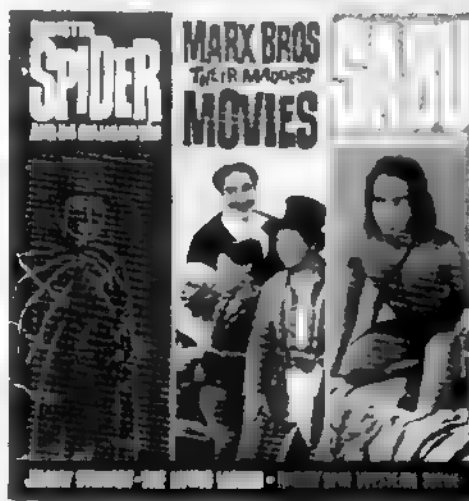
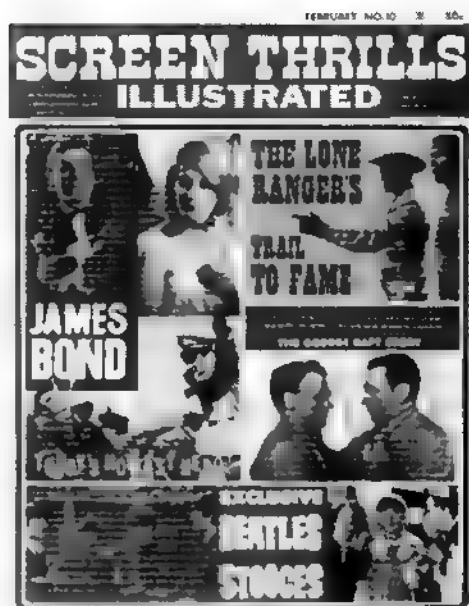
SHERMAN: Jim Warren was terrific. He let us do what we wanted. He let us loose with printer's ink and publisher's cost; he let us do anything crazy we wanted. Jim was everything I wasn't when I met him: worldly, a businessman, clever, a good promoter. He always said to me, "I'm your mentor!" [laughs] Really! I learned about entrepreneurship, having to live by one's wits, and running a company without any financing from Jim Warren. I can't speak of problems others have had with him. I can tell you that Jim is very mysterious and difficult to figure out, and I respect him. He's brilliant, a great innovator in the fields in which he's been involved, and one of the most clever people I've ever known. I'm proud to say that I still have him as a friend after all these years.

FAX: You've had some innovative ideas of your own, such as the nostalgia film festival. How did that come about?

SHERMAN: Early on, I came up with the idea of having a Screen Thrills Film Festival at the New Yorker Theater, and pitched this to [theater head] Dan Talbot—of putting on a festival of old serials. People hadn't seen them in theaters for umpteens years, except maybe at some scratch-house in God-knows-where. I explained to Dan, "Screen Thrills Illustrated is willing to co-finance this with you." He challenged me and said, "It's a great idea and I'd like to work with you, but nobody has these prints." A dumb kid and an enthusiast rather than a businessman, I told him about the two *Batman* serials Columbia had and that Krellberg at 630 9th Avenue had two *Flash Gordon* features and the *Buck Rogers* feature. We talked and talked, and I put a lot of effort into it.

This was one of my early lessons in what it's like to get a good screwing and not enjoy it. Dan then went out on his own and followed up on every lead I gave him. He started out by getting the three features

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From top: Covers from three magazine titles edited by Sam Sherman for Warren Publications.

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from Krellberg, putting them on oneshow, and it went through the roof. Nobody had ever done that in an art theater before, and it absolutely crocked them. I think he must have pulled in over \$10,000 on the weekend alone. It was unbelievable—I went there and it was packed. Then he went and [based on what I wanted to do—run a whole serial at once] got the *Batman* serial from Columbia and ran it in one sitting.

FAX: And it went through the roof again?
SHERMAN: You bet. And this was all my idea. Now let me tell you where this went. The Playboy Theater in Chicago found out about this through Columbia, and they went ahead and put on the *Batman* serial. The same thing happened—it was tremendous business. Columbia continued to do this in other markets. Meanwhile, this all came to the attention of Bill Dozier at Fox, and he said, "Let's revive *Batman* as a TV series." Now I'm not saying that without Sam Sherman this wouldn't have happened—I didn't invent *Batman*—but that is the chain of events. So the idea of having people take your ideas and run with them has always bothered me.

Another similar thing happened at Republic Pictures. I had a very good relationship with Dave Bloom, who was the head of Republic's television division. I showed him *Screen Thrills* and the articles about the Republic serials. He didn't even have a list of the serials Republic had made—he had no idea! Well, I liked the guy, so I gave him a list and an idea: re-market the old serials. I got them to print up a lot of serials, and they re-marketed them for television. I also suggested that they make feature versions out of them and put them on TV. [Most stations wouldn't play serials be-



Sam Sherman and Lee James prepare the Monster for a lab scene in *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*

cause they were an awkward length, 15 minutes or less.) I explained the idea to him, even gave him a quote as to what it would cost to have me cut these serials. Well, of course, they did it themselves.

FAX: You're talking about the Century 66 package of 100-minute serials?

SHERMAN: Believe me, I'm not the only one who liked Republic serials, but I was the one that started what these people did. I was directly responsible for the *Batman* prints creating the *Batman* trend, and the other situation where Republic made the Century 66 features, 24 or 26 of them. And these were not the only things that happened. I went through a few incidents where I came up with good ideas, other people ran them, and I got nothing out of it. At that point, I decided I couldn't ally myself with other companies. I needed to

start my own company, so that I could work autonomously. If it was successful, I would benefit. If I failed, at least I tried.

FAX: What first steps did you take to start up the company?

SHERMAN: I had a friend named Ed Finney, the man who discovered Tex Ritter. Ed made 32 westerns with Tex, making him one of the top western stars. Ed was a producer, in addition to being a lover and collector of old movies.

Along the line, I said to him, "Whatever happened to Denver Dixon?" He had made the 1928 silent western *The Old Oregon Trail*, which is like a mini *Covered Wagon*—a really nice independent film shot in Oregon. Ed said, "He and his son just made a new film." I couldn't believe it. So through Ed Finney, I met Denver Dixon. [His real name was Victor Adamson.] He had worked in the early silent movies on the East Coast. On the West Coast, he began to produce his own films and at one time owned studios. He was a very successful small independent. His son was Al Adamson. [Al actually has the same name as his father, Albert Victor Adamson, Jr.]

FAX: So, you became friendly with Dixon?

SHERMAN: Not only that, I helped him with foreign distribution on some of his products. That was how I got involved with distribution. Plus, Al wanted to start to direct. I saw in this situation a nucleus that maybe could be pulled together. Disparate elements moved together, and a company formed. I should point out that, in that era, New York was invaluable because all of the distribution was done out of here. The major circuits were here. The major networks were here. All the major companies did their distributing out of New York. Having someone in New York was important. So around that time, I decided that the best way to learn about distribution was by thrusting myself into it. I bought the original negative to the 1934 Majestic picture, *The Scarlet Letter*.

In 1964, while in the Army, I had an accident. Denver Dixon, who was then rather old, drove cross-country to see me in the hospital. He told me, "We've got to get you out of here. You've got to become a



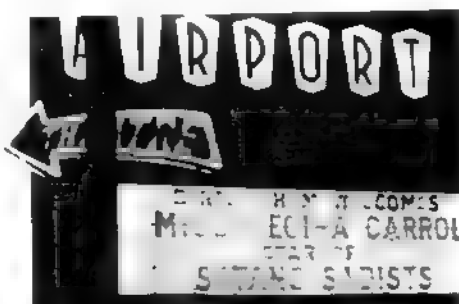
One of Sherman's great promotional stunts: ghoulish members of the fictional National Association of Movie Monsters picket the 1971 National Association of Theater Owners convention, for equal time for *Monsters* on the screen—all to plug *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*. Covering the event for ABC-TV station Channel 7 (among others) in New York was none other than young Geraldo Rivera.

distributor." Sometimes there's a moment in your life when suddenly the light flashes through the clouds and everything clears up. You look ahead and you see that well-defined path. For me, that moment came when Denver said to me, "The major studios are not interested in what you want to do. If you want to be in this business, you'd better get your own distribution." FAX: So, he taught you about distribution. SHERMAN: While I was still in the Army, we started releasing *The Scarlet Letter* theatrically throughout the South—a 1934 picture in 1964! [laughs] I had bought *The Scarlet Letter* from Irwin Pizor. Irwin's dad William Pizor was one of the pioneers in the industry, one of the greats. Irwin was interested in what I was doing, and we became friendly. He and his partner Dan Q. Kennis had a company at that time called Teledynamics Corp. Irwin was affluence personified: tailored to the nines, nice mustache, gold watch chain. He was the epitome of a film mogul and a very educated man as well. I was bowled over by getting to know him.

Another fellow he had working with him had a small desk in the corner of Irwin's big, elegant office. He was a nice informal guy and he loved the enthusiasm I had for *The Scarlet Letter*. He said, "By the way, my wife's uncle Robert Vignola was the director of *The Scarlet Letter*!" This man's name was Kane W. Lynn [Kane Lynn had been a much-decorated World War II hero in the Philippines] and he liked movies and had formed a partnership with [Philippine-based producer/director] Eddie Romero. He made several pictures including: *Lost Battalion* [1961]; a nice horror picture called *Terror Is a Man* [1959]; and a picture called *The Scavengers* [1959, a.k.a. *City of Sin*]. Kane formed a partnership with Irwin Pizor and Eddie Romero [Eddie in the Philippines, Kane and Irwin in New York] called Hemisphere Pictures. They had just made a picture called *The Raiders of Leyte Gulf* [1963], a good film, shot in English with a mostly Philippine cast, and attempted to distribute this. But, they only were getting \$35 play dates in the South, while Denver Dixon was getting \$100!

Irwin and I did a compilation film called *Chaplin's Art of Comedy*. I did it basically to give myself a co-feature for *The Scarlet Letter*. I had it theatrically, and Teledynamics had it for television. It became bigger and bigger on its own, and in fact I almost made a deal with Columbia Pictures to release it. In other words, a lot of things were happening around that time. FAX: So Hemisphere was basically coming up with a lot of Filipino war movies? SHERMAN: Yes. In fact, Kane went to the Philippines and produced two pictures back to back with Jock Mahoney: *The Walls of Hell* [1964] and *Amok*. *Amok* was made for Bob Lippert at 20th Century-Fox and was released as *Moro Witch Doctor* [1965] I've never seen it, but it's not supposed to be very good. Fox was upset because of the two pictures. They didn't get the better one, which was *Walls of Hell*. *Walls of Hell* was sensational, a great movie. I'm

not saying good—I'm saying great. It has not survived because it's black and white. I saw the first screening—the Department of the Navy was there, important people—and they applauded. It played the RKO circuit in New York as the co-feature with



Theater marquees welcomed Regina Carroll as part of the promotional tour for the world premiere of *Satan's Sadists* in Birmingham, AL.

Darling [1965], which was from Embassy. Believe me, it was a good movie.

FAX: So it was you who steered Hemisphere in the direction of horror films?

SHERMAN: Who else? [laughs] I told these fellows, "You're really going in the wrong direction with these war films." They said, "We make them for x-amount of dollars, we sell the foreign, and we make a tremendous profit. Anything we get in the U.S. is gravy." I said, "Why don't you work it the other way? Do something that makes a profit in the United States, then the foreign will be gravy." Based on the success

of *Famous Monsters* and AIP, I convinced them to get into horror pictures. So they took *Terror Is a Man*, re-titled it *Blood Creature*, and double-billed it with *Walls of Hell*. Where they used to make \$35 flat rental on the war pictures, they ended up with \$2,000 to \$4,000 a booking in some situations! I watched as all this happened. It got to the point where I was doing their campaigns for them—writing pressbooks, designing the ads, producing the trailers and the radio and TV spots. That's how I learned to do all those things—on-the-job training at Hemisphere. It was a test lab for me, plus I was making some money.

FAX: Where was Al Adamson while all this was going on?

SHERMAN: At that time, Al was just getting into making pictures. When he came to New York, and I tried to integrate him into Hemisphere, as I was already involved with them. But it just didn't take, like a vaccination that doesn't take. Everyone got along, everyone liked each other, but Kane was really running the show. Kane was devoted to the Philippine situation—he felt he could do more in the Philippines for less money than Al could accomplish in Hollywood. That was basically it, and, actually, he *wasn't* wrong. Their Philippine pictures had unbelievable production value. They looked very expensive. The Philippines had a cottage film industry going back to the silent era, but they were strictly shot in the local lan-

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Regina Carroll was the center of attention in Birmingham, Alabama for the *Satan's Sadists* tour and received the treatment normally afforded a major star.

guage called Tagalog. They were never dubbed, never seen outside their market. What Kane did led to the emergence of Cirio Santiago, and to Roger Corman going over there, and to New World and Dimension Pictures getting involved, and to all these Philippine pictures like *The Big Doll House* [1971]. It all was a result of Kane and Eddie Romero. Kane Lynn was the first person to make Philippine productions a worldwide product.

In 1968, Kane made a statement that everyone now quotes back to me. He said, "Sherman, we're going to send you to Manila!" [laughs] Since I had a technical background in film production and other

areas, he wanted me there to polish up some of the projects. In the '60s, although the pictures made in the Philippines had good production value, they were still recording sound on optical track. [Believe it or not.] I was stunned! I'll never forget the first time we screened *Brides of Blood* [1968], which was originally called *Brides of Blood Island*. It was in New York, and Eddie Romero was at the screening. We were watching a particular scene in which Kent Taylor and John Ashley were out on this beach. I heard some noise on the track and I said, "What's that, Eddie?" He said, "That's a whistle." I said, "Can't it be eliminated?" He said, "No. The Philippines is a noisy place to make movies." And it really was true; there were a lot of problems.

Kane also had me fix some of the pictures up here. I re-did the music, changed the effects, re-mixed them, and changed titles. I did a lot of post-production, patch-up work on films like *Brides of Blood*, *Mad Doctor of Blood Island* [1969]. Then Kane wanted me to be the head of production for Hemisphere in the Philippines.

Well, I must say that it didn't appeal to me. There was nothing exotic about it. It was a third world, depressed area with bad hygiene. People carried sidearms and nightsticks. And, if they got annoyed, all of a sudden you were dead! [laughs] So I said, "Kane, I think I want to stay here or go to Hollywood with Al. I don't want to go to the Philippines." Al and I had been trying, unsuccessfully, to start our own distribution company for years. Along the way, however, I had made a lot of friends. One of these was Dan Kennis, who by then had left Teledynamics.

FAX: And that was the beginning of I.I.P.

SHERMAN: Right. Danny and Al and I formed Independent-International Pictures Corp. toward the end of 1968. At the time, Al was staying in a small room at the Edison Hotel on Broadway and 46th Street—not exactly glamorous living! [laughs] He had a film that we couldn't market for various reasons, so I came up with a list of titles out of my head, including *Satan's Sadists*. The next morning, Al said, "I've written a story for a movie to be called *Satan's Sadists*." My first reaction was, "Hey, why did you take my title that I wanted to use for that other picture?" And, [laughs] I'll never forget what Al said. He told me, "Don't worry about that. I know you. You'll think of another title! I need this now!" So now he was able to call the gang in his picture "The Satans"—and it all started with that title! Al read his story to everybody and we liked it. At that point, Danny Kennis said, "We'll raise the money to make this film." And that's exactly what he did. Al went back to Hollywood thinking it was going to be made.

I was concerned that the picture would be devoid of names because it was such a violent story. However, we'd seen a film that Ray Dorn had made called *Free Grass* [1969]. As a matter of fact, *Free Grass* had been given to me to try to sell. The picture starred Russ Tamblyn, Richard Beymer, and Lana Wood. Eventually, Ray Dorn himself released the film. He wasn't a distributor, but he owned Hollywood Stages at 6650 Santa Monica Boulevard in L. A., where Al had his office.

FAX: A lot of "schlocky" stuff was made there, including Boris Karloff's last four pictures.

SHERMAN: Hollywood Stages was an interesting little place, home of *The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant* [1971], *Dracula vs. Frankenstein* [1971], *Brain of Blood* [1971], and *Horror of the Blood Monsters* [1970]. It was the Poverty Row of the '60s and early '70s. But it was also a nice atmosphere because you didn't feel a sense of competition with the other people. Everybody helped each other, and we all borrowed from one another. We'd have



Motorcycle MANIACS

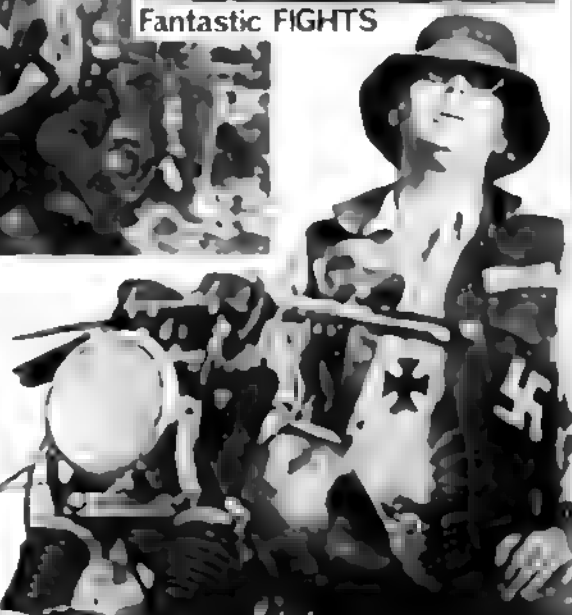


Passion PARTIES



Fantastic FIGHTS

THEY START
WHERE ALL THE
MOTORCYCLE
GANGS LEAVE
OFF!



SATAN'S SADISTS

RUSS TAMBLYN SCOTT BRADY KENT TAYLOR

ROBERT DIX JOHN CAIDOS GARY KENT GREYDON CLARK

REGINA CARROL

FI

AL ADDISON KENNIS-FRAZER

THE 'FREAK-OUT GIRL'

COLOR BY DELUXE

Sensationalistic newspaper ad slick for Independent International's biker classic *Satan's Sadists*.

actors and production people who would hang out in different offices. It was just four walls, but we met a lot of nice people there. Ray Dorn was an exceptionally nice person—he would give you the shirt off his back. If he felt you needed help, he'd give you money. He'd give you whatever you wanted. He was just a nice person, really first-rate.

Anyway, we had this picture *Free Grass* that we were trying to sell back here, and we just couldn't give it away. Nobody wanted it. It was neither fish nor fowl. It wasn't a motorcycle film. It wasn't a youth rebellion film. It just didn't make any sense. It was well-made—directed by Bill Brame, a good director—but it just did not lend itself to marketing. The only release I know of that *Free Grass* got was at a multiple in the Michigan area. I remember somewhere there was a campaign that said, "The stars of *West Side Story* together again—Beymer, Tamblyn, Wood!" It was Lana Wood [Natalie's sister] which made that very funny! But we knew after seeing it that Russ Tamblyn was now working in independent pictures, which he had never done before with the exception—I think—of a picture or two he made for AIP in Japan. Tamblyn was a big star and had a lot of respect. So through Ray Dorn and that picture, Al got Russ Tamblyn, who wore the same outfit—or at least the same hat—he had worn in *Free Grass*.

FAX: Were you out on the Coast when *Satan's Sadists* [1969] was made?

SHERMAN: No, I wasn't. But I gathered



Regina Carol as "Gina" in IIP's *Satan's Sadists*.

that there were a lot of girls on location because of the people chasing them and the resultant activities going on! [laughs] Al hired a cameraman who had never shot a feature, but had been an assistant on documentaries. His name was Gary Graver, and he's had terrific success since then. He's directed and produced and is a really nice guy. Gary started on *Satan's Sadists*. Greydon Clark was an assistant to Al on that picture, helped him with everything. He learned a lot about production on that film and had a very nice role [Acid]. Greydon Clark also has since gone on to make films—he met his wife on that picture [leading lady Jackie Taylor]. Her total involvement in show business at that

time was that she had been Chuck Connors' secretary! [laughs] Al also met Regina Carol [his actress wife] when he went out to have lunch at a coffee shop down the block from Hollywood Stages. The shop was owned by Regina's father Barney. Regina was a dancer who had had a specialty act in Las Vegas. She had worked in some films, but she was basically in between Vegas gigs and was helping her father by waiting on tables. Al ordered something, and she came over and spilled coffee on him! [laughs] That's how the relationship began—and there's been a lot of coffee spilled since then! They became friendly, and he felt that she could play the part. So the part was named for her. Her name is Regina, and she played the part of Gina in the film.

FAX: What about Russ Tamblyn?

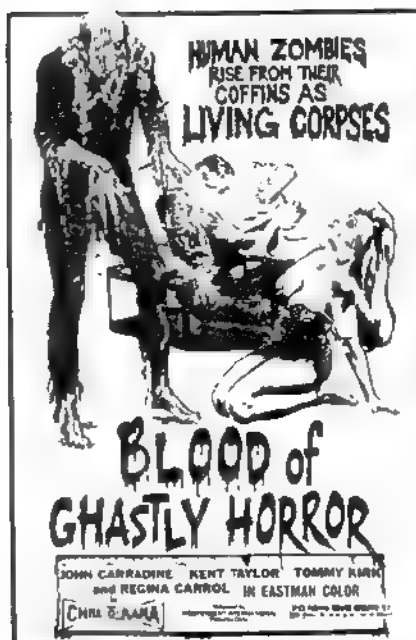
SHERMAN: He was just looking for work. Al gave him a certain amount of free reign to create his own character and to improvise in some spots. I think Russ added a lot to the quirky nature of the film. I used that great close-up—"Yeah, I guess I am a rotten bastard"—in the trailer.

In my opinion, the pictures where you set a schedule, shoot it, and everything works out without major problems, always tend to be successful. *Satan's Sadists* was one of those films where everything worked out. We screened *Satan's Sadists* here, and it was very good. For what we were trying to do, it really worked out well. Complementing that was the fact

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Satan's Sadists reflected the violent nature of the 1960s. Above, Russ Tamblyn and his gang plan to kill off Kent Taylor, Scott Brady and Evelyn Frank.



SAM SHERMAN *continued*

that Mike Curb's organization agreed to score the movie, do a soundtrack album, and have a composer by the name of Harley Hatcher come up with a great score and some nice songs. Curb was very popular in the music business—and later in politics. We polished this all off with nice animated titles by my friend Bob LeBar. We all liked *Satan's Sadists*, so we considered making a deal with AIP and Sam Arkoff. But my great scheme was to start a distribution company. I said, "This is a really good movie. We could go to AIP, which most likely would do a better job with it. But if we release it, it's a great leader with which to start off a company. It would be better if we distributed the picture rather than give it to somebody else." As it turned out, for the first release of a new company, we did a better job than AIP would have done. We didn't have anything else that was important. Our whole life was that picture! [laughs]

I went to L.A. in May of '69, when the first corrected print was ready at the lab. I picked it up and took it with me. I put the 35mm prints in a carton and tied a piece of rope around it. [laughs] Then I flew from L.A., to Dallas, to Kansas City, to the South, up to Cincinnati, and up and down, and here to there. I leapfrogged the country. Now you've got to remember, in those years these drive-in type pictures were booked to get as good playing time as you could in the summer. And that time was eaten up months in advance. Everyone said, "You're too late. You won't get any dates." But I'm a perpetual optimist. I said, "It's a good film and I can sell it." Well, I didn't have to sell it. The film sold itself. The film screened *incredibly* well. I gave luncheons—the luncheons helped—and I talked to exhibitors about what the company was going to be and other films we were going to make. I came back to New York with approximately 500 play dates for the summertime, which was unprecedented! The first world premiere of this movie was held in two cities. The first was in Birmingham, Alabama. It showed in Cobb Theaters, and to add some pizzazz, we had Regina Carroll fly in from Hollywood to appear with it. I was her chaperone because she was Al's girlfriend. I chaperoned her around from newspaper interview to TV station interview, and we were given the red-carpet treatment. She was the guest star at the Shriner's circus. It was a terrific time. We also went to the Jet Drive-in in Montgomery—in a car without air-conditioning on the famous road that had the Selma to Montgomery march. FAX. Your publicity sought to somehow tie the Manson murders to the picture. SHERMAN: We're talking about something that happened over 20 years ago, so I don't remember exactly what the connection was. Manson had been where this was shot, or the people had known him, or Manson had worked on the engine of a car—there was some connection. I think I remember being on the phone with Re-



Above, a variety of sensationalistic newspaper ad slicks from some Al Adamson-directed films.



Left: Dracula sends the monster to attack Dr. Beaumont (Forrest Ackerman) in *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*. Right: Dracula awaits the Monster's revival.

gina when she said, "God, they arrested that guy, Manson. He was working on our car when we were shooting!" It was something like that, some weird connection that triggered this thing. I figured, "Let's milk this picture as much as we can," so I came up with a loose tie-in. If you want to call that tasteless, go ahead. Talk about going to extremes! But in those years, I didn't care. I was very aggressive with that sort of thing. Today I wouldn't do it, but I came up with something on the heels of that horrible tragedy that tied the movie into it.

FAX: Marketing can be everything when promoting a low-budget picture.

SHERMAN: The name of the game was to come up with a good approach and marketable elements within the film. We couldn't promise a "Hammer" picture, with a budget ten times what we had to spending. We couldn't compete with those people, but we could put some old-timers in it, some gimmick, some something. Promise something and deliver it. That's what we tried to do, to deliver it within our limitations of available money.

FAX: With a tag line like "The Most Vicious and Violent Film of the Decade" on *Satan's Sadists*, who was your target audience?

SHERMAN: Drive-ins. We targeted people who were looking for titillation and exploitation. In Boston, *Satan's Sadists* played in December. There was a blizzard and the roads were closed. At one drive-in, people went out in deep snow to the drive-in to watch the movie! I've never heard of anything like that. I've heard of places in the south where it was so hot that people couldn't stay in their cars at the drive-ins, but this was unprecedented.

FAX: So *Satan's Sadists* was a big success.

SHERMAN: The film was extremely successful. We then inherited other pictures that Al had made previously, and did things with them. That included *Five Bloody Graves* [1969], the western—we added a little nudity in an opening scene to the film; *Blood of Ghastly Horror* [1971], *Hell's Bloody Devils* [1971]; and *Horror of the Blood Monsters* [1970]. I was involved with Al on some of these picture—some on the set, some from a distance—prior to Independent-International. I just wanted to

mention the five pictures that we started with, those four and *Satan's Sadists*.

FAX: What memories do you have of working with John Carradine?

SHERMAN: He was a very professional kind of guy. The only thing he really liked talking about was *Stagecoach* [1939].

FAX: What's the full story on the making of *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*?

SHERMAN: It went through a long process—what I would call "a difficult pic-



The Monster (John Bloom) as he appeared old and moldy before being discovered by Dracula.

ture." The pictures that go easily, like *Satan's Sadists*, are very nice. You feel good about them. The pictures that are long and drawn-out and redone and changed are a pain in the neck. They're pictures that you can't warm up to very well. At least I can't. The original production was to be called *Blood Freaks—The Blood Seekers* was our production title—and the original script was pretty gory. We wanted to get Paul Lukas to play the role that J. Carroll Naish wound up taking. Lukas had the same Hungarian voice as Lugosi, and I felt he would have been very good. Lukas agreed to do it but then reconsidered. It was so bloody, he decided not to. Also scheduled to be in the picture was Broderick Crawford in the part of the police detective that Jim Davis took.

The picture, unfortunately, had to go

into production on a certain date because it was the only day some of the actors were available. There were elements that weren't fully ready to go, but, to make a long story short, the picture *had* to be shot that way. We ran a rough cut of what had been shot up to a certain point, and it didn't seem to have enough bite. Admittedly, Al was going to add some other things to it, but I still felt it wasn't strong enough. We needed something more exploitable. So we kept editing and trying to figure out a way to make it exploitable. Eventually I came up with the idea of adding Dracula and Frankenstein, neither of whom were in it originally. We went back and re-shot a substantial portion of the film, eliminating a lot of the confusing elements like the presence of a motorcycle gang. There are vestiges of that left in the film, but a great deal of it has been dropped.

At one time we wanted to play that up based on the success of *Satan's Sadists*, but that was *really* an extraneous element in a horror film. We put these other elements in the film, and it went through a prolonged series of re-edits with different editors, etc. I now wanted to call it *Blood of Frankenstein*, but it still wasn't strong enough. So I came up with the idea of *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*—a fight between the vampire and the monster. We shot that on the East Coast—those last 20 minutes—which were added last. It went through three separate filmings; it was the *Heaven's Gate* of Independent-International! [laughs] The fact that the picture ended up finished at all is one of life's miracles, and the fact that it's had such a wide a release in all media is incredible.

FAX: Anthony Eisley says it's the worst movie he ever did.

SHERMAN: My opinion is that his opinion stems from not being in the movie. He must have seen it on TV or at a screening. He really must have been upset that we killed him off at the end of the picture.

FAX: He didn't know you were going to do that?

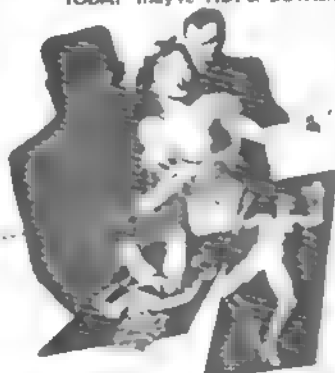
SHERMAN: Of course he didn't know! But there was no way we could see clear to pay him to come to the East Coast and film new scenes. When we got down to the

Continued on next page

end, everything was being done on pennies. The only thing we could do was kill him off. Yet, as much as he may dislike that, it's one of the highlights a lot of people love in the film. You've never seen a movie where the nominal hero is killed off like that. It's definitely unusual. It comes out of left field, and yet it *does* work.

Don't get me wrong. I'm one of the biggest critics of the movie. There are a lot of things wrong with it; we *know* that [laughs] We had nothing but problems from the word go, one disaster after another! Naish and Chaney were very sick throughout. FAX: Was Naish confined to a wheelchair? SHERMAN: No, he wasn't, although legend has made that the case. As a matter of fact, he didn't even know how to use a wheelchair. In the lab scenes, we had a lot of trouble keeping him away from the side where the high voltage props were rigged—for fear that he might electrocute himself. He was a very spunky guy, a tough old codger. I was talking to him once, thinking he'd have a sense of humor, and I said, "Well, Mr. Naish. I know this is not exactly PRC..." And he snapped, "You bet your ass it isn't!" [laughs] But all his stuff was filmed at Hollywood Stages, which is

YESTERDAY they were COLD & DEAD—
TODAY—they're HOT & BOTHERED!



DRACULA VS. FRANKENSTEIN

Re-release ad art for *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*.

a nice big commercial studio. He had a nice place to sit. He had food when he wanted it. People were attentive to him. He was courted with probably more respect than he got from big companies, yet he was not well and was very grumpy. You really couldn't kid around with him. I never felt that moment of informality

with him; he was pretty much on the stiff side. But if he didn't need the money, he shouldn't have done the picture. My opinion is that when people are so ill that they look as bad as Naish and Chaney did, they shouldn't work. When I saw the still of Naish, before I even saw the dailies or anything, I couldn't believe that was him. He'd changed so completely.

FAX: But you wanted Naish and Chaney in the picture regardless?

SHERMAN: Al was the one who was taken in. The agent who represented them gave Al a good deal. When Al heard Naish and Chaney, it sounded fantastic. Al made the deal, and he hadn't even seen them. When he did see them, it was already too late! Chaney couldn't talk because he had cancer of the throat. He was big and bloated from chemotherapy, or from drinking, or from cirrhosis of the liver, or some other health problem. Naish had false teeth that clicked, and he looked like he was dying. Should we be blamed for that? I feel that they really pulled the wool over our eyes. Unfortunately, because they ended up looking so bad, they set the tone for the whole picture. There's nothing that can undo that. Yet, there were a few places where they had their moments. The film has some appeal to the Universal and the old-time horror fans, having *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* in it, Chaney and Naish....

FAX: Plus there's all that '50s music.

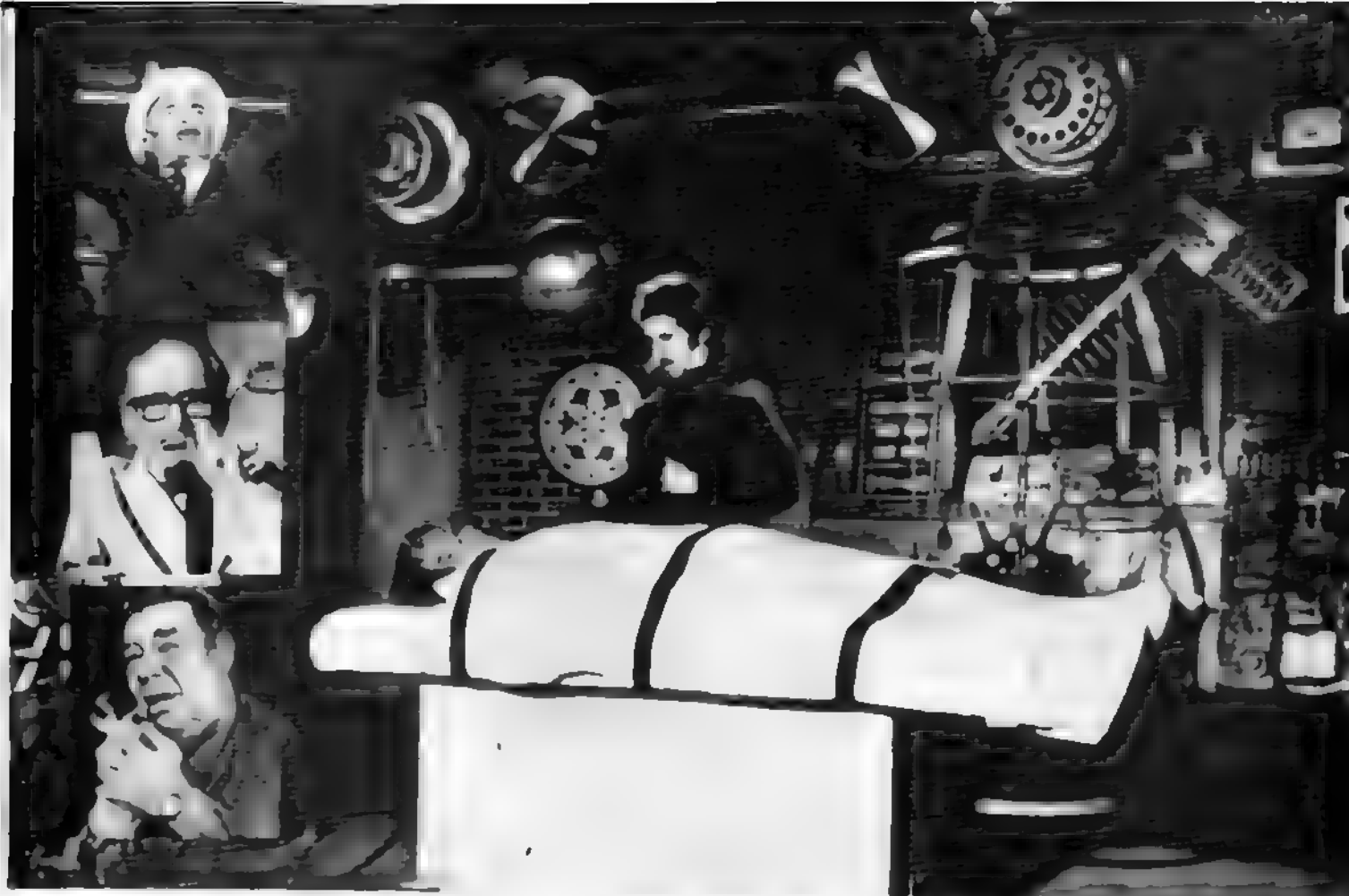
SHERMAN: Well, that turned out to beby accident. My friend William Lava had written the original music for the picture. He died while we were still editing the film. When we re-shot the picture, padding out the ending, we just couldn't repeat his music any more. It was just too much! The bulk of the music in the picture was an original score along with those Universal cues from *Creature from the Black Lagoon* [1954], some of the Paul Sawtell cues, and music from *Kronos* [1957]. We got them from libraries as library cues to pad it out with something different. As it turned out, the fact that the music had an identity with the older films gave *Dracula vs. Frankenstein* a further little bit of something that people could pick up on.

FAX: How did you get along with Chaney?

SHERMAN: I wasn't there for that, but I can pass on to you some of the things that I know from Denver Dixon. He had known Lon Chaney since the '30s and had worked in pictures with him. Denver told me that Chaney was dying from cancer of the throat and that he was constantly tired. He had to lie down between takes. He kept saying to Denver, "You and I are the only two left... They're all gone... I want to die now. There's nothing left for me; I just want to die." He kept saying that throughout the shooting of the movie. So we had a man who had been a heavy drinker, who had cancer, who was very ill. He was dying, *knew* that he was dying, and *wanted* to die. These certainly are not the elements that make up great acting in a movie! And yet, you'll have to admit that even in that non-speaking role, he did bring pathos to the character. Originally, there was a voice-



From top, J. Carrol Naish readies a monstrous injection in this scene from *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*. Frankenstein and Dracula do their best to live up to the "versus" in their namesake film.



Inset photos, from top: Angelo Rossitto, Carroll Naisch, and Lon Chaney Jr. Above, the lab set built by Ken Strickfaden for *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*.

over he did that was supposed to be like narration. You'd see him and hear his thoughts. But his voice was so raspy and impossible to understand, we dropped it. There's something very pathetic and tragic about seeing Naisch and Chaney in the movie. I don't like it because I really did like both of them.

FAX: Do you have any anecdotes about Angelo Rossitto or John Bloom?

SHERMAN: For the part of Grazbo the dwarf, the only person I could think of was Angelo Rossitto. I thought so much of him from the Monogram-Lugosi pictures. So I said to Al, "I want Angelo Rossitto. There's nobody else you can use in the picture." Al said, "Where do I find him?" And I said, "I don't think he's acted in years, but he has a newsstand on Hollywood Boulevard." Al said, "How can I find him?" But I insisted, saying, "Please?"

Al went out on Hollywood Boulevard, walked up and down it for two weeks, and looked for Angelo Rossitto. But there was no Angelo Rossitto to be found. Finally he said to me, "I can't find him! I refuse to spend another day wandering around like an idiot on Hollywood Boulevard looking for your man!" Way, way back, the agent who represented Chaney and Naisch had told Al that he represented a dwarf. "We've got to go with his dwarf," Al told me. I had to agree. It turned out that his guy was Angelo Rossitto! [laughs] **FAX:** On the other end of the spectrum, what about 7'4" John Bloom?

SHERMAN: I'll never forget the day when John Bloom was being made up as the Frankenstein monster. He was moaning with his eyes closed and his hands clasped over his stomach. He said, "I hope we're



John Bloom, an unusual Frankenstein monster.

going to get this done on time! I don't have time for this! I hope we're going to be finished!" He was muttering, muttering, muttering, so I finally said, "John, what's the matter?" He said, "This is tax season. I've got to be working tomorrow on income taxes!" He was a tax accountant. He was in films as a monster only because he was 7'4"! [laughs] Isn't that what you call "theater of the absurd"?

I have one other anecdote. I wanted to have the original Frankenstein lab equipment for *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*, so Forry Ackerman, who was helping us make the picture, said, "I'll take you to [the de-

signer] Ken Strickfaden's house." Forry took me to see Strickfaden, a nice man. Strickfaden took us out into his workshop, or it may have been a garage some place. There was all kinds of wild stuff in there. Then he excused himself and said, "Wait here for a minute. I've got to do something. I'll be right back." He went to throw a switch. He had me standing on a steel plate, and the next thing I knew, a bolt of lightning went through the air and stopped right at my right toe. You should have seen me jump a couple of feet off the ground. We knew who was in control from that point on! [laughs]

Strickfaden was very proud to be a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, for which my uncle was the head attorney at the time. Strickfaden said, "Oh, if I could only get written up in their journal." I called my uncle. I sent him the material, and they did a big, big spread on Kenneth Strickfaden. More than the money I paid him, more than anything, that was what I did for Kenneth Strickfaden. And he loved it.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

Be sure to be on hand next issue when the filmmaking career of Sam Sherman continues with more behind-the-scenes stories about other IIP exploitation classics such as: *Brain of Blood*, *Angels' Wild Women*, *Hell's Bloody Devils*, *Blazing Stewardesses*, *Nurse Sheri* and more. Don't Miss it!



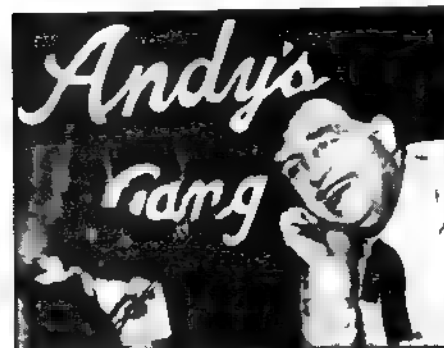
Ernie Kovacs

KOVACS ON THE CORNER One of the first series for NBC (WPTZ-TV) containing some of his most famous and with E. E. Cummings and Alfred the Dog. Hi comedy (1952) 30 min. Order No: 594 Price: \$19.95

THE ERNIE KOVACS SHOW This classic comedy called "Eugene," written, produced and directed by Kovacs, contained no talking, none in the sketches, none in the musical numbers. Sound effects in a room with a tilted room and innovative (and very funny) use of video. Recommended. (11/24/61 ABC-TV) 29 min. Order No: 1057 Price: \$19.95

TAKE A GOOD LOOK (with Ernie Kovacs) Visually inventive panel show using his usual outlandish sketches. Adams, Carl Reiner, and guess mystery guests. Produced as "a combination of Marx and A-Lug" (1960/ABC-TV) 30 min. Order No: 444 Price: \$19.95

DANGER A live "TV noir" series showing the dark side of the human soul. The three programs, "The Lady on the Rock," "Death Among the Relics," and "The System," were all directed by Sidney Lumet. (1951, 1952) 77 min. Order No: 389 Price: \$29.95



ANDY'S GANG Andy Devine, successor to Smilin' Ed McConnell, hosts this popular Saturday morning kids show, telling stories and introducing a harmonica playing orangutan. But the real star of the show was, "Froggy the Gremlin," who punked his magic twanger and croaked, "Hi ya, kids! Hi-ya! Hi-ya!" along with "Midnight the Cat" and "Squeaky the Mouse" (c. 1958, NBC-TV) 24 min. Order No: 522 Price: \$19.95

BLOOPER Fest

BLOOPERS from STAR TREK and LAUGH-IN Hilarious goofs, kidding around on the set, fun scenes, flubbed lines, pats on the fanny, limp wrists, etc. You get the idea. One of the funniest celebrity-filled programs that ever belly-laughed its way onto a videotape. Caution: contains some strong language. (1966, c.1970) 26 min. Order No: 574 Price: \$19.95

Video Oddities Presents "GTV"

This Special Selection of "Golden Age" Television is now Available to you on Video through FILMFAX!

Specially Priced \$19.95
Now as Low as \$19.95 Each



ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER The complete three episode story of "The Cold Sun," starring Richard Crane, Scott Beckett and Sall Mansfield. A "trotanic missile" is needed to ignite the sun before it's too late! Produced on film at NBC. (1954) 79 min. Order No: 69 Price: \$29.95

ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER "The Pirates of Prah" in its complete three episodes. Space pirates from the planet Prah have struck, Rocky uses a "Cold Light" to make his spaceship invisible, then sets out to battle the interplanetary gang and their Lady Boss. (1954) 78 min. Order No: 70 Price: \$29.95

ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER In "Blast Off" Rocky and Bobby are space-wrecked on a planetoid where the natives worship them as gods. They find an ancient flying saucer and even a beautiful girl. Three complete episodes tell the whole story. (1954) 78 min. Order No: 71 Price: \$29.95

ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER Rocky is framed for space piracy on a distant planet. His crimes are described in flashback (film clips from previous episodes) and, just when things look blackest in "The Trial of Rocky Jones," an earthquake strikes. Complete three episode story as seen on NBC-TV. (1954) 79 min. Order No: 72 Price: \$29.95

SPACE PATROL Three different "high-adventures-in-the vast reaches of space" starring Ed Kemmer and Lyn Osborn. First, alien creatures who can walk through walls invade the Solar System. Next, an Atomic Harmonizer threatens to shrink a whole city. Then, Buzz and Happy try to unravel the secret of a strange piece of metal discovered by 30th century archeologists. (1955) 78 min. Order No: 685 Price: \$29.95

VIDEO YESTERBLOOP A collection of all those outtakes you weren't supposed to see on your television. (Caution: contains some strong language and a few naked ladies.) Includes the famous *Price Is Right* broadcast in which a contestant's blouse falls off, the story of the Crunchbird, irate obscene gestures, newsfilm boners, a naked lady in a fountain, "telepathic thought transmission," and outtakes from *All My Children*, *One Day At A Time*, *Happy Days*, *Mork and Mindy* (you're not gonna believe these!) and plenty more. (1960s & '70s) 76 min. Order No: 766 Price: \$29.95



Foodini the Great - "Pinhead"

FOODINI THE GREAT TV pioneers Hope and Morey Bunin first brought their puppets to network TV in 1948 with a 15 minute 5-day-a-week series called *Lucky Pup*. The two most popular characters, Foodini and his bumbling assistant Pinhead switched to a weekly half hour format in Aug. of '51. Foodini was a magician-cum-swami, hypnotist, mind reader, escape artist, and card trickster who performed actual magic tricks on-camera. (Autumn 1951, ABC-TV. Has a slightly noisy soundtrack) 22 min. Order No: 1244 Price: \$19.95

THE NUT HOUSE Produced by Jay Ward (*Rocky and Bullwinkle*) and written by Bob Arbogast (among others). A live TV series of skits that should have been a hit, but for some reason, never made it to the home screen. (Six years later, Rowen and Martin's very similar *Laugh-In*, was successful.) The actors are unknowns, but this show stands on the unique quality of its writing--and these skits are hilarious. *Bravo Nut House*. (1962 CBS-TV) 34 min. Order No: 247 Price: \$24.95

DUPONT SHOW OF THE MONTH ("TREASURE ISLAND") with BORIS KARLOFF. Karloff, Hugh Griffith, and Richard O'Sullivan star in an elaborate production of Robert Louis Stevenson's rip-roaring pirate tale, "Treasure Island." Karloff plays the drunken old pirate, Billy Bones and even though this was a live presentation, the parrot stays put on Long John Silver's shoulder throughout the show. Remarkable, complex sets. (1960) 88 min. Order No: 1108 Price: \$29.95

DIVORCE HEARING If you're a fan of today's *Divorce Court*, you're going to love this 1958 version! Two couples, each facing divorce on the grounds of extreme cruelty, square off on camera and let loose with both barrels. Absolutely fascinating viewing--just like a neighbor's bedroom window. (1958) 27 min. Order No: 309 Price: \$19.95

SUPERBOY SCREEN TESTS This series of actor's auditions for an unsold *Superboy* series included screen tests by young John Rockwell (who was chosen to appear in the never-aired pilot episode) and four hopeful teenage Lana Lang aspirants. Order No: 335 Price: \$19.95



Superboy Screen Tests

THE RETURN OF VIDEO YESTERBLOOP From the creative, far-sighted, and looney Warner Brothers editors: bloopers, bleeps and blunders from Ronald Reagan, Humphrey Bogart and many other Warner's stars. Our former president's expletives when he flubbed a line made Reagan turn red, his leading lady went white and the director got blue in the face! How's that for colorful language? Includes "Blow Ups of 1941," "Blow-Ups of 1946," "Blow-Ups of 1947." (1941-1947) 27 min. Order No: 1058 Price: \$19.95

ARCHIE This unsold pilot for a series based on the popular comic strip starred John Simpson and Roland Winters and predated the popular animated version, which eventually ran for 10 years on the networks. "The Electric Cupid," has Archie using a computer to match up the guys and gals for a big dance. All your favorite Archie characters (Jughead, Veronica, etc.) are here and the program also includes a 12 minute sales pitch for potential sponsors. (1964) 43 min. **Order No: 327 Price: \$24.95**

THE ALDRICH FAMILY In this excellent live tv production, Henry's upset because he hasn't received an invitation to a costume party. A poignant and warm comedy that made a successful transition from radio. The program was sponsored by Jello, Birds Eye Foods and Swans Down Cake Mixes and starred Jackie Kerk, House Jameson, Lois Wilson and Robert Casey. (1950) 27 min. **Order No: 544 Price: \$19.95**

WATCH MR. WIZARD A whole generation was introduced to physics and chemistry with Mr. Wizard. In this show Don Herbert and his young visitor Susan study "Explosions," starting with bursting balloons and ending with the hydrogen bomb! One experiment realizes it was on live tv and fails to work, but the rest go off with a satisfying roar. One of the finest educational programs ever made. (1956) 30 min. **Order No: 808 Price: \$19.95**

DR. IQ Jimmy McLain is the good doctor who gives away Silver Dollars for the correct answers to questions like "Who wrote the quote, 'To err is human, to forgive divine?'" George Ansbach kicks off the evenings fun with, "I have a Lady in the Balcony, Doctor." Early tv quiz fun. (1953) 30 min. **Order No: 512 Price: \$19.95**



Howdy Doody

PUPPET PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS HOWDY DOODY Two complete broadcasts from 1959 featuring Buffalo Bob (Bob Smith) and Chief Thunderbolt (Bob Keeshan in 1948). A delight for youngsters. Watch it live. Don't miss the gallery trying to figure out what's so funny. A real tv classic. (1948, 1959) 60 min. total. **Order No: 585 Price: \$24.95**

HOWDY DOODY Two more complete broadcasts from the world's most famous children's program. Includes his trip to West Virginia. Winter Spring and Summer. The first show from the second episode from the Hayes. Don't miss the "Hk" - a limited animation cartoon serial. (1959) 49 min. **Order No: 652 Price: \$24.95**

THE \$64,000 QUESTION The best remembered show from the era of the Big Quiz. A Philippine American lady lawyer decides to keep her \$32,000. Virgil Earp (nephew of Wyatt Earp) wins \$32,000 in the category of "The Wild West," and more. Hosted by Hal March, Questions by Dr. Bergen Evans, from out of the "locked vault," and the famous Reunion Isolation Booth. (1957) 29 min. **Order No: 832 Price: \$19.95**

YOU ASKED FOR IT Two complete live tv "Believe-It-Or-Not" format programs, with all the performers requested by the viewers. An elephant carries a man by his head, a musician plays three trumpets at the same time, a truck whip artist, the "Living Mannequin," and six kids who play the William Tell Overture on marimbas (with hoofbeats!) Hey, don't blame us. You asked for it! (both 1954) 58 min. total. **Order No: 1170 Price: \$24.95**



Vincent Price

COLLECTOR'S ITEM: "LEFT FIST OF DAVID" A rare opportunity to see two masters in an unsold CBS-TV pilot. Peter Lorre and Vincent Price play a sinister pair of art dealers on the trail of the fabulous "Left Fist of David," whatever that may be. Made a few years before Lorre's death in 1964. (c. 1960) 27 min. **Order No: 634 Price: \$19.95**

THE MAGNAVOX THEATER Premier of the first full-length movie made for television, "The Three Musketeers." Produced by Hal Roach, Jr., directed by Budd Boetticher, and starring Robert (Hideous Sun Demon) Clarke, John Hubbard, Mel Archer, and Marjorie Lord. Plenty of flashing swords and swashed buckles. (1950) 53 min. **Order No: 496 Price: \$24.95**

SEE IT NOW ("Automation") Edward R. Murrow set an example of excellence in the field of television documentaries. This particular program is an exploration of how "automation" is changing the way America works and how computers and automatic machines are revolutionizing industry. Walter Reuther voices his concerns about workers being replaced by machines. The computers are primitive by today's standards, but the program is an intelligent exploration of a revolution that continues today. (1957) 82 min. **Order No: 241 Price: \$29.95**

THE FAMILY GAME Three families compete in a program where the parents try to guess what their children had answered to leading questions asked when Mom and Dad were offstage. Bob Barker hosted this silly sendup and it's easy to see why it lasted only six months. (1967) 29 min. **Order No: 307 Price: \$19.95**

BEAT THE ODDS Warren Hull hosts this syndicated Los Angeles game show. Contestants play a word game with rotating letter wheels and a "Mr. Whammie" to foil their luck. (1969) 22 min. **Order No: 325 Price: \$19.95**

THE QUIZ KIDS One of early tv's most famous programs broadcast live from Chicago. Fran Allison was the MC. Includes an atrocious live commercial. "If you take a cup of coffee from a filled jar and transfer it to a filled milk jar, stir it, take 1 cup of the milk/coffee mixture from the mixed jar and put it in the coffee jar, how much liquid have you transferred?" Tune in for the answer. (1949) 30 min. **Order No: 480 Price: \$19.95**



RED NIGHTMARE Jack Webb stars in Warner Brothers' propaganda film, made for the Department of Defense, about the Red Menace conspiring to take over the American Way of life. An average guy finds out what life would be like under the Soviet system. Laughable today, but no joke in the McCarthy Era! (1953) 30 min. **Order No: 595 Price: \$19.95**

LUX VIDEO THEATRE The tv adaptation of "To Have and Have Not," from a screenplay by William Faulkner. Edmond O'Brien and Beverly Garland turn in stellar performances. Compressed into one hour and limited by set restrictions, this prestige program is a showcase for pros at work. (1957) 59 min. **Order No: 317 Price: \$24.95**

CAESAR'S HOUR One of the funniest series from the era of live tv comedy. Stars Sid Caesar, Carl Reiner, Howard Morris, Hugh Downs announces, and the writers included Mel Brooks and Neil Simon. Includes skits called "The Commuters," "Reach for your Brains," and "Night time." (1957) 45 min. **Order No: 261 Price: \$24.95**

CAESAR'S HOUR It was the last show of the season and Caesar, along with his cast of regulars and guest stars, really conquered the audience with laughter. Our favorite voice man, Don Pardo, did the announcing and the show was written by Mel Brooks and Selma Diamond, among others. A creative finale to an all-star series. (1956) 52 min. **Order No: 814 Price: \$24.95**



THIS IS YOUR LIFE Ralph Edwards surprises Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy in this popular 1950s series. A heart-warming experience and an absolute must for Laurel and Hardy fans (even though Stan wasn't really very happy about it). (1954) 30 min. **Order No: 507 Price: \$19.95**

PERSON TO PERSON Here's proof that Edward R. Murrow could even get an interview out of someone who doesn't talk! Murrow, complete with his trademark cigarette, visits with Groucho and Harpo Marx in two selections from the popular CBS-TV series. Groucho ad-libs, introduces his cook and maid and plays the guitar. Harpo doesn't say a word, but he does play his harp. (From 1954 and 1958) 30 min. **Order No: 355 Price: \$19.95**

SHOWER OF STARS Big-time variety (1/8/55) as Groucho Marx brandishes his acid wit during this live TV broadcast. Also appearing are host William Lundigan, leggy Betty Grable, Ed Wynn, Danny Thomas, and others. Plus a preview of "The Forward Look" lineup of '55 Chryslers. (Sorry, no tail-fins yet.) 60 min. **Order No: 1181 Price: \$24.95**

SILVER THEATER A rare Chico Marx appearance in a situation comedy, "Papa Roman." (CBS-TV syndicated version retitled "Hollywood Half Hour.") Also featuring Margaret Hamilton and William Frawley. Spiciness in spots but worth it! (1950 or 1951) 25 min. **Order No: 314 Price: \$19.95**

NBC COMEDY HOUR A primo example of an all-star '50s variety show, unsophisticated yet appealing. Groucho Marx appears in a replay of the hilarious "Gonzalez Gonzalez Interview." Hostess Gale Storm ("My Little Margie") also welcomes Stan Freberg, Jonathan Winters, Ben Blue and others. Complete with commercials and lots of talent. (1956) 55 min. **Order No: 803 Price: \$24.95**



MARIHUANA Fans of *Reefer Madness* will light up over this poorly acted unabashedly bad melodrama. A high school teenager and her pals are befriended by a sharp pusher and soon all get turned on to "giggie weed" at a beach party. One girl drowns, another gets pregnant, and all eventually sink lower and lower into a cesspool of depravity and crime. Wow! Be sure to take a look off this campy delight. (1936) 57 min.

Order No: 1109 Price: \$24.95

REEFER MADNESS (Tell Your Children) A pristine print of this cult classic belongs in everyone's video library. A fictionalized "true" story of the horrors of marihuana, "that violent narcotic, the unspeakable scourge of the nation's youth." (c. 1938) 67 min.

Order No: 584 Price: \$29.95

THE TERROR OF TINY TOWN By the time you're done watching this oddball oddity about "Half-Pints in Ten Gallon Hats," you probably won't remember if there was a story in it or not. Funny thing, though, about this all-midget western. All the props and Tiny Town sets are normal scale, so our bite-size bronco-busters seem to be packing gigantic six shooters, and go under the saloon's swinging doors instead of through them! But, don't let your better judgment sell this film short. (1938) 63 min.

Order No: 105 Price: \$29.95

TOMORROW'S CHILDREN This camp classic actually implies that sterilization isn't really all that bad, as long as the *right* people go under the knife. Fer-sure! The film portrays the blind tyranny of doctors, welfare workers and judges who force people to submit to the operation. For example, one nice young girl, about to marry, is tagged because the state learns that her entire family consists of drunkards, cripples and idiots. So whose doesn't? Anyway, it's a wonderful companion piece for *Reefer Madness* and *Sex Madness*. (1934) 65 min.

Order No: 176 Price: \$24.95



MANIAC "Unhealthy thought creates warped attitudes which in turn creates criminals and maniacs!" Or so says Dwain Esper, the mastermind behind this twisted little curio. At one point, he has his "Maniac" gouge the eyeball out of a cat and pop it into his mouth, like a tasty hors d'oeuvre. Supposedly based on Edgar Allan Poe's "The Black Cat," this sex horror-exploitation quickie includes nudity and a shadowy rape scene. (1934) 51 min.

Order No: 1192 Price: \$24.95

LENNY BRUCE For hardcore comedy with a bite, sink your eye teeth into this live performance (August, 1965), starring the pit bull of comedy, himself. Filmed at San Francisco's Basin Street West, this was Bruce's only performance film. His irreverent and sometimes grotesque routine contains an occasional obscenity and remarks on his notorious New York State "bust." 59 min.

Order No: 547 Price: \$24.95

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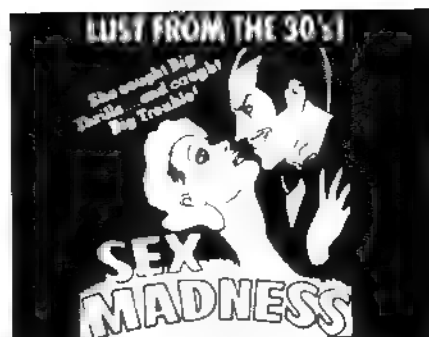
Order No: 1232 Price: \$24.95

WITCHCRAFT THROUGH THE AGES (Haxan) You've seen clips from this silent horror classic hundreds of times. Now own the complete, uncut Swedish version with all the black masses, torture, sexual perversions, satanic possessions, and witchcraft you can tolerate. Because of its explicit nudity, vulgarity and physically graphic images, this film has been banned in many countries. Written, directed, and starring (as Satan) Benjamin Christensen. Silent with music score. (1922) 113 min.

Order No: 274 Price: \$29.95

THE YOUNG AND THE DAMNED (Los Olvidados) Written and directed by Luis Bunuel (who collaborated with Salvador Dali three decades earlier on *Un Chien Andalou*). With this brilliant work, the legendary Spanish filmmaker returned to international prominence after an absence of seventeen years. Winner of the Grand Prize for Direction at Cannes, it's a surrealist portrait of the horrors of poverty, misery and degradation in the wretched slums of Mexico City. Spanish w/English subtitles. (1950-Mexico) 79 min.

Order No: 269 Price: \$29.95



SEX MADNESS (They Must Be Told!) In the 1930s this was sizzling stuff! The point was to warn "decent people" about the tragic consequences of syphilis—thus preventing ill-fated marriages, the break-up of families, and the procreation of congenitally deformed or diseased children. Then again, maybe the point was to make a sexploitation flick under the guise of a public service drama. You be the judge. Subtle as a sledgehammer, this depressing Depression classic is delightfully unsophisticated. (c. 1937) 53 min.

Order No: 589 Price: \$24.95

HOLLYWOOD REVELS It's time for a good old-fashioned burlesque show, complete with mediocre singers, baggy-pants comedians, sexy slots, and a bevy of beautiful babes who artistically remove their outer garments. Although mild by today's standards, this film is definitely for adults only. Featuring stripteasers Aleene Dupree, Mickey Lotus Wing, Hillary Dawn, and others. Music written and conducted by Billy Rose. (1947) 58 min.

Order No: 61 Price: \$24.95

TONIGHT FOR SURE If you thought *Dementia 13* was Francis Ford Coppola's first film, guess again. This unusual offering from the director of *The Godfather* films and *Apocalypse Now* was made while young Coppola was still attending UCLA. The story is set in 1961, "somewhere on the Sunset Strip," and has plenty of naked ladies "doing their thing." Not a stag film, but nevertheless, a true collectible for "buff film" buffs. (1961) 66 min.

Order No: 935 Price: \$29.95

GO! GO! GO! WORLD In the *cinema verite* tradition of *Mondo Cane*, this film lays bare even more "primitive rites and civilized wrongs." Touted as "A Bold, Lusty Portrait of the Weird and Wicked Things that People do Around the World—Filmed On the Spot as it Happened!" this European shockumentary comes with the disclaimer "We Didn't Make the World—We Only Photographed It!" Technicolor and in English. (1964-Italy) 85 min.

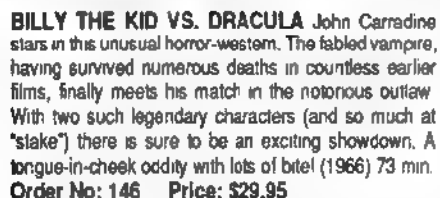
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WHERE THE GIRLS ARE Any army vet who still gets misty-eyed for boot camp will enjoy reliving that magic moment when he saw his first training film on the dangers of VD. Our hero is a clean-cut, girl-back-home-type, just beginning his first tour in Vietnam. When he doesn't hear from his sweetheart, the poor boy succumbs to the temptingly sexy women in a massage parlor. He got a towel, he got a girl, he got a dose! A moral lesson and a (boot) campy experience in living color. (1969) 23 min.

Order No: 149 Price: \$19.95

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ATROCITIES OF THE ORIENT It's WWII and the "ruthless Japs" have taken over the Philippines, screaming "Banzai" and perpetrating every atrocity imaginable: looting, torturing, raping, burning, bombing, bayoneting and beheading. An odd mix of romance, combat, propaganda and songs. A real "racist" not. (1959) 80 min
Order No: 523 Price: \$29.95

THE ROAD TO RUIN Sally, an impressionable teenager, is led astray by her more experienced friend Eve in this early exploitationer about juvenile delinquency. After Sally becomes pregnant, her callous boyfriend arranges a coat-hanger abortion, then forces her into prostitution. More "fun and shames" 1920s-style than you've ever seen in one film. Silent with music score. (1928) 57 min. **Order No: 1065 Price: \$24.95**

DEVIL'S WANTON This early work by famed Swedish director Ingmar Bergman poses its philosophical questions brilliantly, depicting a dark world of nihilistic poets, pimps and prostitutes, doomed to live out their lives in desperate state of confusion and despair. Watch for the surrealist nightmare sequence. Existential exploitation at its best. In English (1949 Sweden) 78 min. **Order No: 270 Price: \$29.95**

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CAMOUFLAGE This WWII ranty, attributed to none other than Walt Disney, is an amusing, lesson in military camouflage—with a definite "Slap-the-Jap" attitude. A real find for cartoon collectors. In color (1943) 21 min. **Order No: 13 Price: \$19.95**

WIZARD OF OZ Fourteen years before Judy Garland skipped down the yellow brick road, a pasty-faced comedian named Larry Semon directed, co-scripted and starred (as the Scarecrow) in this early surrealist version of L. Frank Baum's fantasy classic. Don't miss the performance by a remarkably thin, youthful, Oliver Hardy as the Tin Woodsman. Silent with music. (1925) 83 min. **Order No: 1206 Price: \$29.95**

BILL AND COO Come to Chirpendale, a burg populated entirely by birds, and take a beak at the budding romance between Bill, the struggling cabbage, and Coo, the daughter of the wealthiest "man" in town. The plot dovetails until a heroic Bill finally bags his bird. Ken Murray narrates with plenty of cornball puns, but we'll sparrow you the details as the story is nothing to crow about. It's the actors, all real, live, feather-molting love-birds, that literally keep this show singing. (1947) 58 min

Order No. 1081 Price: \$24.95

SHIRLEY TEMPLE'S BABY BURLESKS The Depression's dimpled darling began her career at the age of four in these parodies of famous movie genres, featuring all-child casts of toddlers wearing adult clothing on the upper parts of their bodies and diapers (with gigantic safety pins) below. The satiric humor is actually quite sophisticated and Shirley, herself, called them "the best things I ever did." Including, "Polly-Trix in Washington," "The Pie-Covered Wagon," "Glad Rags to Riches," "Kid in Hollywood," "Kid in Africa" (1932-1933) 50 min. total.
Order No: 1007 Price: \$24.95



GLEN OR GLENDA (I CHANGED MY SEX) Intended as a "serious" study in transvestism, this low-budget docudrama quickly becomes a parody of itself. In one of his campiest performances, an elderly Bela Lugosi introduces the story from a shadowy room decorated with skeletons, voodoo paraphernalia and WWII bomb casings. Director Ed Wood himself stars as the tortured "angora sweater-loving" transvestite in this ludicrous, but lovable exploitation classic. "Snips and snails and puppy dog tails," buy this video or land in jail! Also starring Wood's first wife Dolores Fuller. (1953) 64 min. **Order No: 740 Price: 29.95**

DETOUR Film noir was never better than in this dark melodrama about a piano player hitchhiking to California to visit his girl, only to be beaten down by the ironies of fate. Taut direction, hard-boiled dialogue, and good casting made this PRC programmer an absolute classic. There's murder, blackmail and unexpected plot twists all set in post WWII America—back when even morality was still black and white. Directed by Edgar G. Ulmer and starring Tom Neal and Ann Savage. (1945) 69 min.
Order No: 949 Price: \$29.95

DELINQUENT DAUGHTERS The youth of America are running amok! A high school girl commits suicide and a cop and a reporter try to find out why she and so many other kids are straying from the straight and narrow. The answer seems to be at the Merry-Go-Round Club, a sort of teenage night club. Parents who don't understand, wartime conditions, plus some strong stuff from a hip flask all seem to add to the problem. Starring June Carlson and Fifi Dorsay (1944) 71 min.
Order No: 939 Price: \$29.95

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the characters liked their lives, actually.

"The crews loved Alice. The men on the crew were from the Hollywood I knew. They'd been working there since the '30s and '40s and were all close to 60 years old. They were the first Hollywood crews. Bill Mellor was one of Hollywood's great cinematographers. Every time Alice finished a verse, they all stood up and broke into applause." Soon afterward, the actress would get even louder applause.

Hurricane Carla ravaged Galveston on September 11, 1961 with 173 mph winds and 14-foot waves—the strongest in history up to then. Big Tex, a towering cowboy statue who is the Texas State Fair mascot, got his pants and shirt blown off by the hurricane. Sixteen seamstresses worked round the clock so a scene could be shot the next day.

Ewell corralled the *Fair* bunch to headline a charity benefit. The sellout netted \$50,000 for the relief fund with Boone singing "April Love" and Darin, "Mack the Knife." Tiffin's "Margie" ponytail was scrapped for a mile-high Audrey Hepburn beehive. As she modelled \$3,400 (1961 dollars) worth of Neiman-Marcus gowns, the audience laughed gently as Darin kept cutting into his songs with, "Oh no—here's Pamela in another dress..."

"I was the one basically responsible for making the show look elegant and less showbizzy," remembered Tiffin. "I was representing the store, which in turn was so representative of Dallas. In fact, while in Dallas, I spent most of the money I was making from the film at Neiman's."

The draw of the benefit was not Neiman's, however, but Alice Faye. "Oh, I don't know if I'll be able to sing," Faye toyed with reporters. "It's been so long, you know, but I'll be happy to come on-stage and give some good recipes."

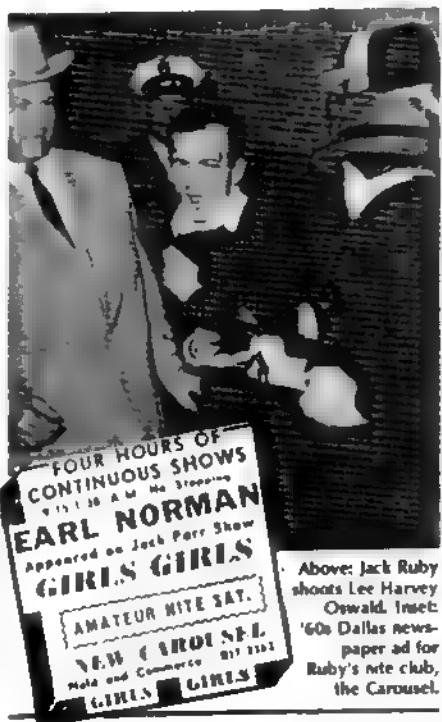
"Alice Faye merely brought down the house," wrote the *News*. "As she walked to the center stage Sunday night, everybody in the wings pressed closer to watch. There was a hush back there..." (She sang "You'll Never Know.")

Publicity for the benefit featured a *Dallas Morning News* photograph of Boone, Margret, and "showbiz" columnist Don Safran, entitled "They'll Help." The photo is significant for several reasons. Small advertisements for Ruby's Carousel Club and Colony Club appear immediately to the right: "Girls—Girls, No Stopping Till One a.m. Featuring Earl Norman—appeared on Jack Parr Show." Secondly, Safran himself would become embroiled in the assassination controversy two years later. On the evening of November 22, 1963, he received a phone call from a frantic Jack Ruby begging him to print that the Carousel Club would be closed for the weekend—in memory of the murdered president. Safran later testified before the Warren Commission.

KLIF radio DJ Ron Chapman, then honeymoon-bound, asked Darin to substitute for him on the air. A phone line and

mike were set up at the Sheraton Hotel. "Because we played a lot of his music on KLIF, we made a deal with him to be my fill-in," said Chapman. "He said a couple things about Mrs. Baird's Bread, which lost the account for us. One comment was, 'Mrs. Baird's Bread—Never Touched By Human Hands. They have a guy there who kicks the wrappers with his feet!' In those days, Mrs. Baird's agency was very sensitive."

KLIF was the rock and roll king of the airwaves in '61. The station was owned by Gordon McLendon, a pioneer of Top 40 radio, who had also produced a pair of films, *The Giant Gila Monster* and *The Killer Shrews* (both 1959). The KLIF studios loomed over Commerce and Har-



wood, location of the 1963 Kennedy motorcade. In the 1964 film, *Four Days in November*, a rare clip of KLIF DJ Russ "Weird Beard" Knight is heard narrating the approaching motorcade. (It has to be heard to really understand its chilling tone.) "And here comes the President's car. Who woulda' thought such a turnout! And now the ticker-tape is starting to fall from the tall buildings. My goodness, this is one friendly crowd greeting President Kennedy here in downtown Dallas!" The studio is abandoned now with "For Lease" signs plastered over its windows—a victim of the decline of AM radio.

There's one scene that two stars from *Fair* remember in excruciating detail. Boone recalled, "Shirley [his wife] and I went together to the premiere of the movie. I went because I hadn't seen it, and there was, for me, a rather steamy love scene with Ann-Margret. We were in a hotel room, and I didn't have a shirt on. I was singing the song ["Willing and Eager"]. I didn't realize, but when you're doing a scene like that—particularly if you're singing—you aren't really aware of what's going on. I had to lip-synch and keep my

nose at a certain position so it wouldn't cast a shadow on Ann-Margret. I was trying to emote, trying to sing, and I didn't know what she was doing. Well, she was sort of pawing my chest, looking like she was really getting worked up! I didn't know that! And now I was watching it in CinemaScope. Suddenly, we were worried about our seven-year-old daughter, Cherry, and her reaction. Instead, she looked up at Shirley and said, 'Don't worry Mommy—he's only acting!'"

"I don't know if Pat mentioned this to you," said Ann-Margret, "but it was his first love scene, I believe, in any film. I actually nibbled on his shoulder, which was very racy at the time! You must remember, this was 29 years ago. We were both very nervous because it's always difficult doing a romantic scene with all those people around."

Margret's peppery Emily is dated: rather than jetting to Hollywood to be a movie star, she travelled from fair to fair via train! A 1991 *State Fair*, unquestionably, would be a sleaze-ploitation midway romp. But here, Emily is mysterious: "I'm not a bad girl, but I wouldn't want to run a Gallup Poll on it."

"Emily's a girl who's been around, who's hard-boiled," said Margret in 1961. "There's so much character and characterization to it. It is the most wonderful role because it has so many variations. It's not just an ingenue."

For example, Emily (who always seems like she's on the verge of a violent mood swing) says, "This is just a split-week in Dallas—no options. I come from a very strong union, darling, and they fine us if we get too serious, dig?" I asked Margret what happened to Emily. Is she still going around from fair to fair in trains, breaking farm boys' hearts? "Oh, boy!" she laughed. "I don't know. You know, I worry about her sometimes." Dig?

Dallasites again swirled around the movie crews as Darin, sporting huge sunglasses, boarded a shiny new Tilt-A-Whirl with stranger Tiffin—who's in pearls and pumps! "I hate derring-do rides and always have since I was a child," said Tiffin. "I get nauseous. I was screaming, telling him I was falling out. Bobby kept clutching my arms and legs so tightly, I had black-and-blue marks all over me for the rest of the film. But he was very helpful; that's when I began to like him. You see, he wasn't really this tough, hostile, cocky, arrogant person. He was really rather a decent guy. He said, 'Nothing's gonna happen—the cars are attached. It's okay.' Meanwhile, Jose was yelling, 'Use it! Use it!' because, in essence, I was supposed to be frightened."

"Almost all of our filming on the midway was late at night," continued Tiffin. "And I remember a very creepy man who was always hanging around and inviting us to go places—me, Pat, Alice, Jose, everybody. He'd say, 'Well, gee, why don't you all come to the nightclub after work?' But after work, you just chow and go to bed. You've got to get up at 5 o'clock the

next day. There's no way. He just seemed to be everywhere—all over the fairground. And he was very impressed with all of us. He was a 'hanger-on.' If you grow up in a sheltered life, like I did, then you pay great attention to every person that crosses your path. And he was just so eager. 'Come on to my...' I think he had a club or something. It was very important to him to see us after hours. Of course, no one can when they work, and no one did. I thought, this man looks sleazy. I recognized him later, on television... I saw him."

After a pause, Tiffin said, "His name was Jack Ruby."

"It was the biggest shock of my life," she added. "I'm positive it was him because I remember the face and the pot-belly and the semi-baldness. Because I was very young, I hadn't met that many people in my life. You pay attention, especially if there's something funny about someone that you don't understand. He wanted to get in with us, like a little kid wants to tag along with the big brother. He looked like a troubled man; he couldn't find a way to walk in a sunlit path."

"Later, I was doing a television pilot with Julie Newmar at 20th Century-Fox in 1963. When we heard that Kennedy not only had been shot, but that he was dead, everyone just called it a day and went home. I turned on the TV at the hotel, like all of America, wanting to see this. As the day went on, I saw Lee Harvey Oswald. Then I saw him shot by Ruby. When I saw that face, I said, 'My God! That's the guy from when we were doing *State Fair*! *State Fair* was in 1961, so it wasn't in the deep past. It was almost as if I was feeling the tremor before the earthquake—but how could I have known?"

From then on, the cast would have different destinies. Boone would have an active career. Tiffin would become Mrs. Clay Felker and move to Rome. Faye would settle down with her husband and family, and Ewell would go on to a quiet life of retirement in California. Ann-Margret became a marvelous film star, while Ferrer's son would marry Boone's daughter, Debbie. Darin would die during open-heart surgery in 1973, with his body being donated to science. He once said, "I'm trying to accomplish something, but I don't know what it is."

On the afternoon of October 10, 1961, the lake where Tiffin sang "It Might As Well Be Spring" was quiet except for the sound of a few whippoorwills. The excitement of the movie crews' presence in Dallas was starting to become a dimming memory. The State Fair of Texas would open to an excited public at 5 p.m. that evening, prompting the *Times Herald* to announce: "A jovial State Fair of Texas will jump with a jazzy jive tonight. It's a real rock 'n' roll affair, man. The jammed midway will rock with the sounds of hep music, and the cool cats will roll in the nickels of a kingdom of kids."

Golden afternoon sunbeams pierced the Sheraton's windows. A weary Alice Faye packed into her suitcase a cute midway

toy, a gift for her week-old grandson whom she'd see for the first time that night in California. As she folded her belongings, KLIF played the '61 State Fair of Texas theme song, "This Is My City." The lyrics proclaimed Dallas "One of the Leading Cities of the Southwest." Quietly humming along, the actress clicked off the radio and sauntered to the window of her penthouse suite to look at the beautiful "Big D" skyline one more time. Something caught her eye down the street. "What in the world is going on?" she thought. Police squads were roping off the entrance to Live Oak and Pearl. Shrugging her shoulders, she picked up her bags and walked out the door.

That afternoon, the *Fair* cast departed from Love Field. Boone flew off to be a keynote speaker with Barry Goldwater for "National U. S. Day"; Tiffin departed to Oklahoma for a *One-Two-Three* PR tour. This time, however, the *Fair* stars were overshadowed by another star—the one from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Within hours of the *Fair* cast's departure at Love Field, another flight descended at the same airport.

Few people know about John Kennedy's first trip to Dallas two years before his assassination. At the door of Air Force One, the crisp October sunshine glared into Kennedy's face. On October 10, 1961, he waved to the cheering crowd of 400. In town for two hours to visit the ailing Sam Rayburn at Baylor Hospital, he and press secretary Pierre Salinger boarded a black '62 Lincoln. Three motorcycle policemen guided the motorcade through the city, at one point a mere two-and-a-half blocks from an orange-bricked depository looming over Elm Street at Houston.

Kennedy took a moment to visit 7-year-old Larry Faulhaber of 5815 Fairway, Dallas, Texas, who'd broken his leg. Returning to Love Field, he shook hands with U. S. Attorney General "Barefoot" Sanders, then walked to the Secret Service agents, thanking them for their "excellent performances." Heartily shaking hands with Police Chief Jesse Curry, Kennedy walked the ramp and waved good-bye. Air Force One slowly climbed into the melon-colored sunset, disappearing into the cotton clouds.

Kennedy would visit "Big D" again....

"I didn't see *State Fair* as a metaphor until recently," Tiffin reflected thoughtfully. "Somehow, there was a code that everyone accepted in those days. It was very important that you were considered decent. It was even a compliment—'Well, he's a decent chap,' or, 'They're a God-fearing family.' People don't say that anymore. However, when I saw that film, I thought that was the basic American way of life that everyone shared.... There are no Main Streets anymore. The small towns are dying. The work ethic is gone. It was extremely disturbing watching it. It was just as if something had died. As a citizen, the sense of loss that I felt watching the film really can't be explained."

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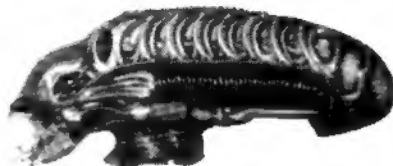


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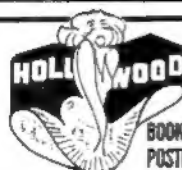


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chained (1970) and *Angels Hard as They Come* (1972). Finally, the peace freaks fight back in *The Peace Killers* (1971). Finally, the outlaw biker and the long-hair dropout merged again in the last great biker drama of the decade: Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper's *Easy Rider*.

Easy Rider was the beginning of the end for the classic hard-ridin' biker film formula. Columbia Pictures (who grabbed the project after Sam Arkoff at AIP refused to grant Hopper directorial control of the film) tried to set *Easy Rider* apart from the standard AIP biker fare with ads like, "A man went looking for America, and couldn't find it anywhere." That was a far cry from "Chopper outlaws riding their hot throbbing machines to a brutal climax of violence"—a typical AIP biker ad of the day for *Angels Die Hard* (1971). Hopper and Fonda's fusion of counter-culture hippie with biker on the lam—along with cameraman Laszlo Kovacs' artistic road sequences—struck a chord in young audiences, and the highways of the nation were soon filled with young people on cycles wearing starred-and-striped helmets, "looking for America" like Wyatt (Fonda) and Billy (Hopper).

The same year that the critical acclaim and box-office success of *Easy Rider* undermined the appeal of pure biker trash, the Rolling Stones rockumentary *Gimme Shelter* obliterated any counterculture sta-

tus or glamor that the Hollywood exploitation films may have provided the real Hell's Angels. The Maysles brothers' cameras captured every second of the Angels' distinctive concert security techniques.

Although commercial biker films have periodically gone in and out of vogue in Hollywood, underground/experimental directors have also explored the motorcycle genre. Over the years, films such as Kenneth Anger's (author of the *Hollywood Babylon* books) *Scorpio Rising*, Sid Furie's *The Leather Boys* (1963), and Andy Warhol's *Blow Job* (1964) and *Bike Boy* (1967) explored the leather and chrome gay/biker subculture. British director Joseph Losey's *These Are the Damned* (1962) was a futuristic science fiction story concerning a motorcycle gang of "Teddy Boys" that influenced later films like *A Clockwork Orange* and the *Mad Max* series. The British leather/biker erotic sub-genre reached its nadir in 1968 with *Girl on a Motorcycle*, starring Marianne Faithfull (Mick Jagger's old girlfriend) on a Harley-Davidson. (Watch for the scene where Faithfull pees off her fur-lined black leather jumpsuit and says, "My black motorcycle devil makes love beautifully!")

Russ Meyer may have anticipated the outlaw biker's film future before anyone in his 1965 black-and-white offering *Motor Psychol*, starring Stephan Oliver and plenty of Meyer's trademark buxom cast members. "The action behind the headlines!" proclaimed ad copy for this action-

exploitation picture. "Bike riding hoodlums flat out on their murder cycles!"

In the genre's waning years, producers tried every exploitation scam to wring the last drop of box-office appeal out of the motorcycle formula. American Indians took on evil bikers in *The Savage Seven* (1968). Joe Soloman's Fanfare Productions explored the relationship between cycle gangs and the press in *Run Angel Run* (1969), when biker William Smith sells his gang's exclusive story to "Like" magazine for \$10,000. Soloman unabashedly spliced together more unlikely genre genes in *Werewolves on Wheels* (1971). Then in 1973, just as the biker craze seemed all but dead, a ghoulish motorcycle gang returned from the grave in *The Death Wheelers* (also known as *Psychomania*).

Since the middle '70s, the outlaw biker has continued to appear in a variety of other films, most notably in sci-fi fantasies like *Knightriders* (1981), *City Limits* (1984), and *Timerider* (1985), in which a time-traveling cyclist goes back to the Old West. Actor, stuntman and founder of the New York Hell's Angels chapter, Sandy Alexander released his ten-year labor of love *Hell's Angels Forever* in 1985 proving, along with *Easyrider* magazine, that at least a few hog-ridin' fools are still out there living the credo of *The Wild One*: "You don't gotta go anyplace special, you just gotta go. Get out there and have a ball." And wouldn't we all like to do just that. Well, maybe some of us....

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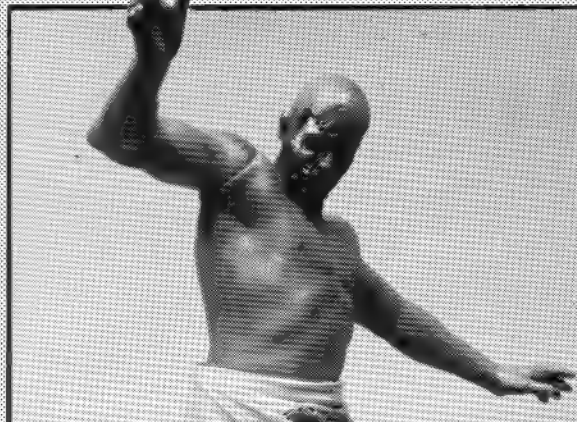


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NOW IS TOMORROW (1958) Robert Culp stars in an unaired TV pilot to rival any *Twilight Zone* episode. Atomic Bomb paranoia at its most frightening! Discover a strange breed of men, in control of nuclear weapons, who have the power to press the button that could destroy the world! Also, on the lighterside, another unaired TV pilot called **SWINGIN' TOGETHER** (1960) A cross-country romp with a band looking for "gigs" in their beat-out bus. Starring Bobby Rydell, James Dunn and guest star (a very young) Stephanie Powers. (60 min.) Order No: MC-16 Price: \$24.95

THE PENDULUM (1956) This excellent-but-overlooked series, hosted by John Bentley, had a definite "Hitchcockian" flavor as well as a fatalistic viewpoint, as expounded in its prologue: "The pendulum swings, and destiny weaves a pattern. The story of people who could not stop *The Pendulum*." Two episodes: In "The Price of Vanity," young Christopher Lee, a greedy and ambitious art dealer, enters into a path of destruction when he thinks he has discovered a lost "Madonna," actually painted by a local starving artist. In "Death on the Boards" a ballerina who can no longer dance engages a young understudy from a concentration camp behind the "Iron Curtain." When her husband falls for the younger woman, she seeks appropriate revenge. (58 min.) Order No: MC-61 Price: \$24.95



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